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## ABSTRACT

This theme issue is devoted to discussions of early childhood policy issues. "Creating a Shared Vision: How Policy Affects Early Childhood Care and Development" (Judith L. Evans) defines policy, discusses the motivation for changing or creating national policy and the process for changing such policies, and provides a sample design for an early child care and development (ECCD) review. Case studies of societies where this change process has worked are included for the countries of Malaysia and South Africa. "The Interconnections between Child Development, Policy and Programming" (Robert G. Myers) discusses traditional and alternative conceptions of linking research and practice. "A Multipurpose Model of Nonformal Education: The Mother-Child Education Programme" (Cigdem Kagitcibasi and others) illustrates how an applied research project carried out with scientific rigor by academic researchers can, over time, have an important effect on policy. "The Convention on the Rights of the Child: Moving Promises to Action" (Robert G. Myers) provides an update on the Convention and mechanisms for compliance, discusses early childhood development in the Convention, and suggests questions for readers to ask about how the Convention's provisions have been implemented in their own countries. Programs designed to provide high quality services to young children and their families in Chile, Ghana, Bangladesh, and the Netherlands are profiled in the next section. "Network Notes," a section which includes letters to the editor, news from regional networks and international organizations, and announcements of 1995 and 1996 meetings, publications and videos, and a calendar, is also included. (DR)

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# Coordinators' notebook

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## Creating a Shared Vision: How Policy Affects Early Childhood Care and Development

JUDITH L. EVANS

A recent policy initiative in Ghana, *The Accra Declaration*, has established a radically new perspective and approach to the country's attention to young children. It puts highest priority on children who are at greatest risk. It calls upon all relevant government departments, agencies, non-governmental organizations, individuals, and other partners in early childhood development to collectively broaden Ghana's scope and vision for young children. The Accra Declaration has provided the impetus for greater cooperation between government, donors, and non-governmental organizations. It also sets the stage for a very different kind of programming for young children, and offers official sanction for a greater variety of activities to receive attention and funding. Moving away from the more traditional emphasis on preschools as preparation for formal schooling, it calls for early childhood care and development programmes to make a range of community-based ser-

vices available to the children who are most in need.

Because the policy arose from a National Seminar on Early Childhood Development (1993), it represents a process of thinking about young children and their needs, carried out collectively by diverse stakeholders in ECCD. As the Ghana government works to adapt its education and social strategies to this new perspective, it will be supported by the stakeholders who helped bring this focus on children forward.

What does the Ghanaian experience have to do with you? It is an example of the way in which non-governmental organizations, government and donors can come together to create policies and programmes to support young children and their families. In this edition of the *Coordinators' Notebook* we will explore what policy is and how we, the early childhood community, can influence the development of policy that supports young children and their families.

Many of us engaged in planning and creating programmes for young children see policy as a distant,

abstract process, carried out by suited politicians sitting behind paper-laden desks. We view policymakers as inaccessible as they make decisions about our fate, dictating national priorities and how the national budget is to be allocated. We are aware of policy only when we find ourselves supported or limited by it, but most of us do not see ourselves as active participants in the creation of policy. In reality, however, we are all affected by policy, or its lack, on a regular basis. If we are going to make a real difference in the lives of young children and their families then we must focus our efforts on creating policies that will allow needed resources to be shifted to structures and programmes which can provide that support.

It is perhaps useful to step back and consider all the levels on which we deal with policy. We begin by defining it more clearly. According to the *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, (1969), policy is "any plan or course of action adopted by a government, political party, business organization or the like, designed to influence and determine decisions, actions and other matters". The definition also describes policy as "a course of action, guiding principle or procedure considered to be expedient, prudent or advantageous".

When we see policy as a course of action designed to influence decisions and actions, it becomes a less abstract proposition. At a national level policy represents a distillation of a philosophy about the role of government in the lives of those being governed. It positions the government in terms of what it will and will not support. Policy guides how monies are allocated and the processes that will be put into place to disburse the monies.

There is increasing interest within governments in creating national policies that guide and validate the provision of a broad range of early childhood care and development and family support activities. To do that effectively, governments need information from the field of early childhood development on what kinds of policies can be developed to most effectively support young children and families.

Many within the early childhood community fear that the energy it would take to get involved in the political process of creating policy would be a drain on already limited resources. Yet, for the long-term it is important to focus our attention on policy. If we are not involved in the policy process, others will be. We have a responsibility to bring our knowledge, skills, and experience to the creation and implementation of policies that support young children and their families. The early childhood community needs a better understanding of the relationship of policies to planning and programmes, the types of mechanisms that can be put into place to effectively serve as policy, and how to go about creating an effective policy if that is deemed desirable.

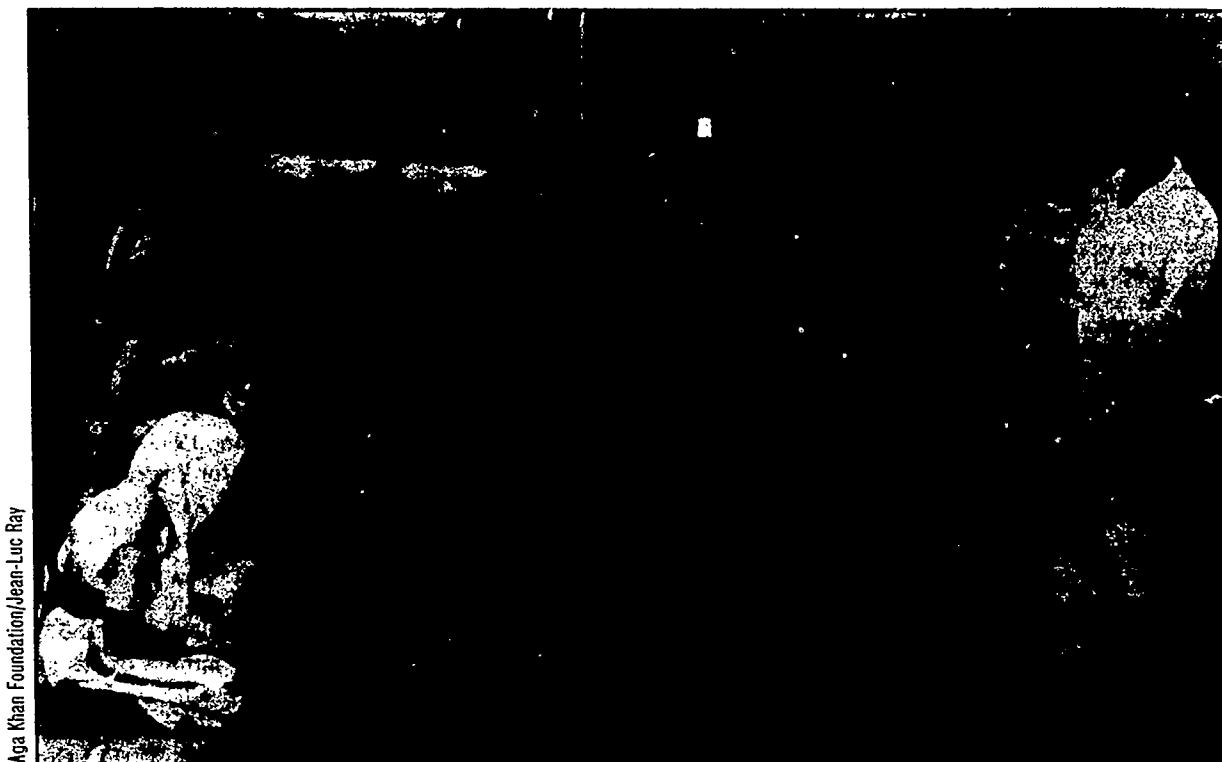
Within this issue of the CN the question being explored is, How can we influence the development of policy that supports young children and their families? To try to answer that question we will present a

series of three articles. The first offers a brief discussion of what policy is and is not. It outlines the kinds of information that policymakers need in order to make informed policies regarding young children and describes a process that can be undertaken to generate that information and get it into the hands of policymakers. This is illustrated by case studies from Malaysia and South Africa. The second article is a brief discussion of the relationship between research and policy, and the third article looks at a specific instance in which the combination of a strong programme and longitudinal research have led to the creation of a national policy.

## Policy—What it Is and Is Not

Policy frames the course of action taken by governments in relation to the people. This happens at several levels. At the most general level is the style of government in place—democratic, capitalist, socialist, etc. At this level there are *broad policies* that frame how the government operates, the judicial and legal systems and the type of economy that is in place. Within that broad framework is *social policy* which addresses the role of the government vis-a-vis families and society as a whole. What does the government see as its responsibility in relation to families and the care and development of children? Within the general social policies are *sectoral policies* that determine the services to be provided by the sector. For example, there are education policies that specify when the government becomes responsible for the education of children, whether or not attendance at schools is mandatory, and if so, for how long. Within the sectoral policies are policies that address *implementation*. These policies are much more specific and define who has responsibility for what. If there is to be intersectoral collaboration it specifies how that should happen. Implementation policies clarify the role of central government in relation to local units, and they define standards and procedures. The levels are interlinked. In order to have a comprehensive understanding of policies within a given country it is important to assess the policies at all levels.

As part of an article on the relationship between policies and programmes in India, Mina Swaminathan (1993) presented an analysis of 135 countries. She ranked them on the continuum from developing to developed countries, and also ranked them according to where they fit along a continuum ranging from market economy to socialism. Third, she rated them from best to worst in terms of their maternity support laws and policies. Not surprisingly the Scandinavian countries (developed countries with a socialist philosophy) had the most comprehensive set of laws and policies in support of women and families, and the most generous provision by the government. Also, not surprisingly, the United States (developed country with a strong market economy philosophy) was



Aga Khan Foundation/Jean-Luc Ray

**Working women (and men) need policies which support them as workers and parents.**

ranked the worst in terms of its policies and laws in support of women and families, and had the least government provision. In general, whether they were developing or developed countries, those with a socialist philosophy had more comprehensive policies and laws in place than countries based on a market-oriented economy. (pg. 8)

It is important to note that simply having a policy in place is not necessarily a good thing, for some of the following reasons.

**Policies can be inappropriate.** Swaminathan noted that many of the developing countries "have borrowed their legislation directly from the industrialized countries with very different conditions, and it is hence often inappropriate to their situation". (pg. 9) She provides the example of the Maternity Benefits Act (1961) in India. Within the act there are provisions that protect pregnant women from being fired because they are pregnant. Women are also to be freed from doing arduous work during the last 10 weeks of their pregnancy. This Act addresses the needs of women working in the formal sector. In India this is only 11% of all working women, 89% are in the informal sector, so this Act has little meaning for them. Not only does the Act apply to only a very limited work force, but even within the 11%, only 2.28% of those women have benefitted from the Act. (pg. 3) In essence the Act has little meaning for the great majority of working women in India.

**Policies can be restrictive rather than facilitative.** In an attempt to address an issue, policies may be created which inhibit rather than promote what was originally desired. There are many examples of this within the early childhood field. As early childhood programmes begin to proliferate, many governments decide they cannot afford to operate ECCD programmes themselves. However, they want to be supportive of the programmes being developed as the result of NGO and community initiative. They then decide that an appropriate role for government is to provide guidelines for the programmes and to register them so that they know what programmes are being offered, and where. The government develops regulations for the establishment of centres. What tends to happen is that these regulations (generally based on standards from developed countries) are so restrictive that the majority of current ECCD programmes cannot comply, and operate illegally. In effect the government limits the availability of quality ECCD programmes rather than supporting a diversity of approaches appropriate to the setting. A Nigerian example illustrates the issue.

In 1987 the Nigerian government issued Guidelines on Pre-Primary Education. (Federal Ministry of Education, 1987) Within the section on Requirements for Pre-Primary Institutions the following areas were addressed: physical facilities, playground, furniture, fees, teacher qualifications, and other miscellaneous



items Within the physical facilities section (pg. 4) it states:

*Building must conform to the following standards*

- (i) *The classroom size should be 12 m by 6.5 m to accommodate about 25 children.*
- (ii) *Each classroom should be cross-ventilated and well lighted.*
- (iii) *Each classroom must have storage facilities and built-in cupboards for items of equipment.*
- (iv) *The classroom should have two access doorways to serve as alternative exits, and a veranda on either side of the classroom.*
- (v) *There must be a cloakroom, toilets and wash hand basins of appropriate height.*

In terms of furniture the guidelines state:

*Provision of chairs and tables suitable for different ages and sizes should be made. Tables should be made of polished wood or formica surfaces. Chairs and tables should be of light materials and carry no sharp edges. There should be a large table with drawers for teachers' use. Provision should be made for book racks and toy storage in every classroom. (pg. 5)*

In terms of the playground it requires:

- (i) *A well-fenced playground of varying size according to the enrollment of the school...*
- (ii) *The playground should be grassed and installed with facilities for climbing, jumping, pulling...*
- (iii) *A track or hard surface for pushing along wheeled toys should be provided... (pg. 4)*

Few early childhood programmes could meet these criteria. For example, it is hard to imagine that people are able to create grassed playgrounds in the majority of settings in Nigeria. These regulations necessarily restricted the growth of registered preprimary programmes, and incidentally led to an increase in the number of unregistered clandestine programmes.

During recent years UNICEF has been working with the Nigerian government to create a more realistic set of guidelines for the establishment of early child care, development and education (ECCDE) centres. (UNICEF, 1994) Some of the differences are illustrative of a shift from referencing the experience of developed countries to a focus on creating context-appropriate programmes for children. They begin by stating that there are different types of centres (models) that can be developed (pg. 2). These include:

- a. *Rural community-based centres (in community buildings or multipurpose halls).*
- b. *Periodic, rural market-based centres,*
- c. *Urban, market-based centres in low cost shades (sic) or market stalls,*
- d. *Work environment-based centres.*
- e. *Pre-school annex (in primary school premises during school hours),*
- f. *Church/ Mosque annex (in or near the Church or Mosque),*
- g. *Home-based centres,*
- h. *Factory/office-based creches*

The requirements in terms of physical facilities have become:

- a. *Building must be safe, strong and in good condition,*

b. *Classroom must:*

- be spacious*
- be located on the ground floor if a storied building.*
- be equipped with age appropriate seats and mats....*

In terms of the playground, it now calls for a "playground, grassed or filled with sand and with equipment safe for children's climbing, jumping, swinging, balancing". (pg. 4)

Thus there has been a shift from the regulations and standards based on Western, developed country norms to regulations that are more responsive to local needs and resources. Today the policies and the derivative laws and regulations are more supportive of the development of a range of ECCD alternatives within Nigeria, all of which could be registered.

**Policies can be contradictory.** An example comes from India. (Swaminathan, 1993) In 1990, India adopted the National Code for Protection and Promotion of Breast-feeding. In 1992 the Regulation of Infant Foods, Breast Milk Substitutes and Feeding Bottles Act was passed. In essence these support breastfeeding for the first 4–6 months of life. Meanwhile the Maternity Benefits Act cited above provides a woman with only three months of maternity leave. Since some time is generally taken prior to the birth, maternity leave does not take the infant into even the fourth month of life. Within the Maternity Benefits Act, once women return to work they are entitled to two 15-minute nursing breaks, with a small amount of time allowed for travel if the infant is in an off-site creche. The number of working women who could actually continue breastfeeding within these limitations is minuscule. Thus while the two laws (the 1990 National Code and the 1992 Regulation of Infant Foods) try to promote breastfeeding the Maternity Benefits Act effectively forces women to use bottle feeding once they have returned to work.

**Policies can have unintended consequences.**

Many countries have instituted policies that state that establishments employing more than a given number of women have to provide creches at the workplace for their workers' children. This law was enacted to protect women's jobs. It also facilitates breastfeeding and the caretaking of the infant by the mother. It allows women to return to work soon after the birth of the child. While this policy is supposed to help maintain women in the workplace, in many instances it has restricted women's participation in the formal sector. Employers simply hire fewer than the minimum number of women required to establish a creche. Thus before rushing to put a policy or law into place it is important to anticipate the consequences.

**Policies may not be implemented.** To have a policy in place does not necessarily mean that it is being implemented. There may be good (or bad) policies already on the books that have never been enacted. Thus before creating a policy it is advisable to assess what currently exists, the extent to which it

is being implemented and to determine what has stood in the way of its implementation. It may be more important to focus on creating mechanisms that allow for the implementation of current policy than it is to create new policies.

**Having no policy may be better than having a bad policy.** There are times when a certain momentum has been achieved by an idea and there is informal support for the expansion of a programme or project. The project may be flourishing even in the absence of a clear policy to support it. Sometimes turning the spotlight onto the project and attempting to formalize it by creating a policy to assure its sustainability can backfire. Lawmakers can actually curtail the potential and halt the momentum of a project through slow or self-interested deliberations. Knowing when to push for a policy requires sensitivity to the political situation and a careful approach.

With these preliminary notes about policy, what it can and cannot do, we will now turn to a discussion of the process for introducing new policy and/or changing current ones.

## What Is the Motivation for Changing or Creating National Policy?

There are a variety of reasons for creating and/or changing current policy. The motivation for making the change or instituting a new policy will greatly influence the form the new policy takes. For example, policies are often scrutinized when there is a shift in government. This is demonstrated most dramatically in Eastern Europe. With the changes to a market economy there have been dramatic alterations in gov-

ernment policy. In many of the countries there has been a shift from a centralized government which controls all activities to a decentralized system that requires action and decision-making at the regional or district level. In addition, the government is less willing to provide the range of services that were previously accessible to families. An example from Poland is described below by Malgorzata Karwowska-Struczyk (1995):

*Poland is a country which, after forty years of the totalitarian (communist) regime, has started creating the mechanisms of democratic and lawful systems both in the political and social spheres of life. The Republic of Poland is a parliamentary democracy. The structural transformations begun after 1959 resulted from the victory of social and political forces connected with Solidarity and the resolutions of the so-called Round Table Meeting. Only in 1992 did free, democratic general elections take place in Poland for the first time after the second World War.* pg. 1

*In the fifties and sixties creches were founded by health departments of the State administration—the Ministry of Health and Social Security—at the local level. After 1970, when changes were introduced into the health services management, creches came under Departments of Health Care. (i.e. local representatives of the Central Administration). Up until 1992 child care institutions for small children were financed from the state budget. At the beginning of 1992 creche management was taken over by local governments.*

*The decentralization of child care and education institutions, creches included, had both negative and positive consequences. One negative consequence of creches being financed by communes is that many creches have been closed down, but not always those with too few children. Another source of creche financing is parent fees. Previously symbolic, they are so high at present that some parents cannot afford them and prefer non-institutional forms of child care. Parent fees cover the full cost of meals and extra activities. In addition parents pay a parents committee fee. In some communes there is an extra fee for toys, toiletries etc. The communes take upon themselves the staff salaries, current repairs and equipment.*

*As for positive changes resulting from the local management they consist mainly of higher technical and sanitary standards for creche buildings, better provision of toys and equipment and more openness to parents. Parents can stay in a creche together with their child not only during the days or weeks of the adaptive period, but also after it.* (pgs. 11–12)

Poland is an example of an instance when the change in government has brought about considerable changes in terms of the services that the government is willing to provide and the mechanisms used for the implementation of services.

Policies are also changed as a result of international pressures. There are two common kinds of international pressures. The first type are those brought to bear by initiatives that arise from international fora where countries come together and reach joint agreement on a set of principles to be implemented. For



**Knowing when to push for a policy requires sensitivity to the political situation.**

instance, the declaration agreed upon in Jomtien Thailand as a result of the Education for All (EFA) initiative, and the UN approval of the Convention on the Rights of the Child are good examples of this phenomenon. Countries respond to these international initiatives by setting new goals for themselves, establishing different priorities, amending current policies and/or creating new policies. For example, the Government of Botswana, in the Revised National Policy on Education, March 1994, stated:

*Government recognizes the need to develop effective and comprehensive policy on pre-primary education with a view of linking it to the formal education system in the long run... Government will continue to provide an enabling environment for the expansion of this level of education as well as provision of adequately trained teachers and effective supervision. (pg. 7)*

As a result of international initiatives, processes are established to determine the extent to which countries are in compliance with international norms. (A project to identify and develop indicators for use in the monitoring and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child is described on page 61 of this Notebook.)

The second type of external pressure comes from donors. Many international donors set up conditions for the receipt of funds and/or loans. Some of these involve the implementation or revision of a set of policies. For example, some countries are required to make structural adjustments in terms of their economic policies in order to receive funds from donors like the World Bank. Increasingly countries are realizing the need to get their house in order before working with donors, in order to better evaluate what the donor has to offer. One way to address the issue is to set policies in place so that the countries have a clear agenda when they are approached by donors. If the government has relevant policies then it is possible to more clearly facilitate donor coordination and reduce duplication of services. In a recent regional seminar held in Myanmar in March 1995, where this issue was addressed, participants made the recommendation that there be "clear ministerial policies and solid strategic plans of action to which donors are oriented, and into which they must fit" (Shaeffer, 1995, pg. 13), rather than expecting or requiring the country to adjust to the donor's agenda.

Policies are also changed when there is an increased awareness within the government of the need to address a particular issue. This awareness can come about as the result of lobbying, campaigns designed to focus attention on critical issues, and through the use of research (national and international).

## **What Is the Process for Changing Policy?**

Policy creation or change does not need to be a top-down proposition. It does not need to rest solely in the hands of lawmakers and ministry personnel. Most

important, policy is not created in a vacuum. Each local solution, each successful research project, each advocacy effort has the potential to influence decisionmakers' thinking about what best supports young children and their families. In Turkey, as reported on page 24, a research project showing the benefits of parent education has led to changes in the national government policy, increasing government support for early childhood programmes through the Ministry of Education. (Kagitcibasi, 1995) In the United States the mothers of children enrolled in Head Start, a national early childhood programme for disadvantaged children, took to the streets in protest in the early 1970s when the funding was about to be cut by policymakers who believed Head Start was a waste of money. The mothers' actions influenced policymakers to continue support for the programme. Later, longitudinal research results demonstrating the social benefits of preschool education helped to cement government commitment to Head Start, which continues today despite massive cuts in other social programmes.

No matter what the impetus for change, policy-making is a process. The process should assist the government in formulating ECCD policies linked to overall national development priorities. The process should also lead to arrangements for effective implementation, monitoring, management and coordination of ECCD programmes, and subsequent identification of policy and strategy options for strengthening ECCD's contribution to national development. The next section describes a process that was undertaken in recent years in Namibia, Malaysia, and South Africa to create national early childhood policies.

## **Initiating the Process**

The impetus for examining policy can come from a variety of sources, as noted above. As the process gets underway it is critical to ensure adequate participation from relevant agencies and groups, both within the government and from outside. Then someone within the government has to take the responsibility for actually overseeing the process. The extent to which the exercise is taken seriously will depend on whether or not this individual has power or access to power within the system. Policy reviews that are initiated by the Planning Office, or the Prime Minister's Office, or an equivalent body, will get the cooperation of high ranking officials within the various ministries. If the initiative is taken by a ministry with low status, it may be possible to change the policy within that ministry, but it is unlikely that the ministry will be able to impact national policy.

The Office or Ministry that begins the policy review process may receive support from an external agency. As noted, donor agencies may provide technical and/or financial support for such a review. UNICEF is another organization that has taken an active role in the policy-making process.





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As a result of international initiatives, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child, countries are examining their policies that affect children.

### **Determining Who Is to Be Involved in the Process and in What Capacity**

As noted, a government ministry/department generally coordinates the process because ultimate responsibility for establishing policy lies with the government. However, a much broader constituency may well be involved in developing the policy. This can include citizen groups, non-governmental agencies, and the private sector. When a broad-based constituency is involved in the process of creating the policy, and includes representatives of all the people who will ultimately be affected by the policy, it is much more likely to be accepted, embraced and implemented.

Somebody needs to take the lead in overseeing the process. The ministry or office that initiated the activity may continue to coordinate it over time, or stakeholders may decide that the policy would carry more weight if overseen by a different ministry with more perceived power. For example, in the Education for All Initiative, Ministries of Education are designated as the key implementors. However, in many countries it has been necessary to involve other ministries and offices in order to develop national social and economic policies that would support the initiative and garner the necessary resources required by the Ministry of Education to meet national educational goals.

Because government ministries are generally interdependent, and sometimes must compete for limited

resources, it is important that the formation of national ECCD policy not be seen as a unilateral education policy. ECCD deals with the whole child in its family and community context, and thus policymakers need to draw on the support and engage the participation of diverse ministries such as Health, Social Welfare, Women and Youth Development, and, as was the case in Namibia, the Ministry of Regional and Local Governments.

Regardless of who takes the lead in the process, in order to ensure maximum participation by key agencies and sectors and to enable adequate data to be collected, a Task Force should be set up. The Task Force may be composed of only government representatives, or it may be more broadly based, comprising representatives from government agencies, the private sector and NGOs. With the assistance of a small part-time team of local consultants/resource persons hired to undertake specific activities, the Task Force should have responsibility for the following functions:

- define more specifically the needs to be addressed through the study;
- undertake and coordinate the various substudies and activities of the review;
- facilitate the collection of data;
- make arrangements for major review events, such as seminars and workshops;
- ensure broad representation of relevant points of view;
- supervise the preparation of the report;
- review the recommendations and finalize the report.



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Once the policy is framed by the Task Force, it is then the responsibility of the lead Ministry/Office to take the recommendations through the legislative process.

To help the government become aware of a broad range of possibilities, and to make the best possible choices within their country, it is useful to provide case studies of alternatives tried elsewhere. Examples from within the region may be of particular interest. In order to provide the international perspective and a degree of 'objectivity', it may well be useful to include a person with regional and/or international ECCD experience who can inform the Task Force of relevant and alternative experiences from other countries. Sometimes, when stakeholders have competing political agendas, an external consultant can help catalyze the participation of Task Force members who would have trouble accepting the expertise and guidance of any one local resource person.

### Gathering Information

The Task Force needs to build a case for increased investment in ECCD. Policymakers require information that will both convince them that policies need to be changed and guide them in terms of what appropriate policy might be. The data to be gathered need to answer the following questions that policy makers are likely to ask:

- Why should we invest in ECCD programmes?
- What is the need (under what conditions do children live; what is their physical, emotional and mental status) and what is the demand for ECCD programming?
- What coverage is provided by current ECCD programmes, and in what ways does this respond to need and demand?
- In the best of all possible worlds, what would we like to see in terms of ECCD provision? What are some short-term and long-term goals we can set in order to move toward the kind of coverage and provision we envision?
- Where are there gaps in service and why do these gaps exist?
- What would be the most productive role for this government to take in addressing the gaps and supporting provision of quality services?
- What supports and resources—legislative, financial, human, organizational, and technical—are available for the creation and maintenance of ECCD programmes (including governmental, non-governmental, and international resources)?
- What are the costs associated with different models of ECCD provision? Who is currently paying those costs, and who will pay them in the future?

### Moving from Recommendations to Policy and Action

The data-gathering process provides an important foundation for the development of policy. But gathering data and making a set of recommendations are only the preliminary steps in the process. There is then the task of taking the recommendations through the legislative process within the country. The lead government agency will have responsibility for this, and the procedures will vary from one country to another. Even as the process begins it is wise to anticipate what some of the roadblocks might be. For example, is there a significant group or organization that has not been included in the policy-formulation process who may raise opposition as recommendations are put forward? In one instance the government developed its ECCD policy without the inclusion of NGOs who have been involved in ECCD programming in the country over the past 30 years. When the new policy was put forward the NGOs effectively blocked adoption of the policy because they had not been involved in framing it, even though, had they been involved, a similar policy might well have been drafted.

Opposition might also come from a political party that is not currently in power. Their reaction should be anticipated and addressed if possible.

The greatest constraint is likely to be time. Unless there is considerable pressure to act quickly, it can take several years from the time the policy formulation process begins until a policy is actually in place. Then there is likely to be a gap in time between the policy's adoption and putting the mechanisms into place to allow for its implementation. Thus it is important for those involved to realize that they are making a long-term commitment to the process. It also suggests that policy should not be thought of as a way to respond quickly to current needs. Policy should be designed to foster long-term, national development goals and not be viewed as a stopgap measure to respond to pressures of the day.

In sum, those involved in ECCD activities in the country need to determine what they would like to see as appropriate policies within their country. Guidance on what those policies might be can come from outside the country, in line with international initiatives, but ultimately national policies have to be developed within the ethos of a given nation. The questions that need to be asked are: Does the policy strengthen ECCD's contribution to national development? Does the policy allow for ECCD programmes to be linked to and reinforce high priority objectives of the current national development policy?

## A Sample Design for an ECCD Review

One possible design for a policy review is to set up six phases. The activities in each phase would be as follows:

### ■ Phase One—Establishing the Task Force

Membership on the Task Force should include all the important stakeholders, both those currently providing ECCD services and those who could potentially be involved. When possible the Task Force should include NGOs and representatives of private providers as well as government officers. In instances where the government does not want outside participants during the study, NGOs and the private providers can be brought in when the study is reviewed, but before final recommendations are made.

### ■ Phase Two—Conducting an Initial Workshop

The purpose of the first workshop is to analyze the issues, identify data and research requirements, and propose methods of obtaining and analyzing data. During the Workshop the Task Force members and key individuals should make presentations on ECCD activities sponsored by their agencies. This will help establish the level of current ECCD provision and activity among the current stakeholders. The Workshop should also offer an arena within which arrangements can be made for data collection by agencies and by individuals/ groups undertaking sub-studies on areas such as curriculum, children's activities and materials, training and supervision of teachers, parental involvement, community participation and management arrangements, costs, etc. A possible agenda for a two-day workshop is as follows:

#### *Initial Workshop Agenda*

- Introductions
- Clarify expectations for Workshop in relation to the study
- Arrive at a common definition of ECCD
  - Brainstorm what it means
  - Develop definition acceptable to group
- Define why the country should invest in ECCD
  - Presentation on reasons for investment (The Consultative Group publication, *Meeting Basic Learning Needs* is a good resource for this.)
- Come to agreement on what the aims of ECCD provision should be.
- Determine the status of ECCD provision in the country
  - Reports by each of the agencies on their coverage. (Before the meeting they should be asked to prepare relevant statistics/tables to be handed out at the meeting.)
- Identify the gaps in provision
- Outline the information required in order to determine if additional provision is required, and by whom?

- Develop a framework and timeline for gathering the information
- Determine next steps

By the end of the workshop the Task Force members should have a clear understanding of the aims and objectives of the study and their role in it.

### ■ Phase Three—Data Collection and Analysis (6–8 Months)

During this phase, the individuals/ institutions contracted collect data and carry out research according to the requirements and methodologies identified at the workshop in Phase Two. Information collected during this phase will help establish a foundation for the development of policy options to be examined in the next phase.

### ■ Phase Four—Analysis of Data and a Formulation of Policy Options (1–2 Months)

Once the substudies are completed, the researchers should compile the report to be submitted to the Task Force. The report should include a set of recommendations in relation to policy.

### ■ Phase Five—Review and Finalization of Recommendations

During this phase a second workshop would be held. Prior to the Workshop, all those who will be attending should receive a full copy of the draft report and recommendations. Participants at the second Workshop would include Task Force members, those involved in the studies, and invited outsiders (NGOs, private providers, and possibly donor agencies). At this second workshop the findings of the study would be presented, major issues would be discussed and analyzed, and ECCD programme experiences and funding options would be shared for discussion and analysis. Through small group work, participants would then formulate recommendations. These could be shared with the large group and consolidated into a single set of recommendations.

After completion of the Workshop, a subcommittee of the Task Force would prepare a comprehensive report setting out the data base, the issues, the options and the consensus of the workshop. The final report would then be submitted to the Ministry/Office taking primary responsibility for the process.

### ■ Phase Six—Moving From Recommendations to Policy and Action

The Task Force should develop a strategy for disseminating the recommendations and for moving them through the political process. In addition, steps should be taken to inform the broader public about the recommendations so that they can undertake lobbying and advocacy efforts to help assure adoption of the policy. If there is broad representation within the Task Force, it will simplify this task and assure ownership of the policy by constituents.



## CASE STUDIES



UNICEF/IS16/Jeremy Horner

### Case Studies: Where This Process Has Worked

#### ■ MALAYSIA ■

Malaysia<sup>1</sup>, a country rich in culture and resources, is projected to have a population of nearly 20 million people by 1995. It consists of two land masses separated by the South China Sea. Peninsular (or Western) Malaysia, which holds 82.3% of the population has 40% of the land. Sabah and Sarawak, on the other hand, with 60% of the land, are the home to 17.7% of the population.

The population of Malaysia is relatively young. According to population projections, at the present time the 0–15 age group constitutes approximately 39% of the population (18% are in the birth through 6 age group), and 57% of the population is in the 16–64 working-age group. Nearly 4% of the population is 65 or older (EPU, 1991). The population growth rate was 2.3% in 1990. (Yusof & Zulkifil, 1992)

In terms of health indicators, Malaysia has an infant mortality rate of 11/1000 live births, with a maternal mortality rate of 2/1000 live births. The child immunization rates are high: more than 90% of all children have been immunized against BCG, DPT and Polio, with nearly 80% of all children immunized against measles. In terms of nutritional status, 75.5% of all children are in the normal range, only 5% are severely malnourished.

In the 1970s, Malaysia implemented the First Outline Perspective Plan (OPP1), which embodied the New Economic Policy (NEP). The NEP

focused on eradicating poverty and the restructuring of society. The Second Perspective Plan (OPP2), covers the years 1991–2000 and embodies the National Development Policy (NDP). It aims at balanced and sustainable development. It also aims at promoting human resource development and gives priority to the role of the private sector as the engine of growth.

The Sixth Malaysia Plan: 1991–1995 has as its main thrust, "to sustain the growth and momentum and manage it successfully so as to achieve a more balanced development of the economy". One of the specific strategies undertaken to achieve balanced development is to "enhance human resource development".

The goals of balanced development are based on the following:

*Firstly, the principle of growth with equity is fundamental to ensure the realization of a fair and equitable distribution of national wealth. Secondly, a balanced societal development is conducive to the maintenance of social and political stability. Thirdly, the nurturing and moulding of a Malaysian society with high moral values and ethics as well as positive attitudes are fundamental towards the creation of a responsible, resilient, progressive and caring society. The balanced development of the economy is essential to ensure stable growth, minimize social conflicts, promote racial harmony and enhance national unity (Sixth Malaysia Plan: 1991–1995, pg 5)*

With the above parameters of national development, Malaysia has in the last twenty years experienced rapid changes economically and socially. There have been increasing education and employment opportunities for women. For example, the proportion of women classified as unpaid family workers fell from 39.7% in 1970 to 21.6% in 1990. This was largely due to the

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absorption of women into the modern economy. The proportion of women classified as 'employee' rose from 38.9% in 1970 to 62.9% in 1990. (Sixth Malaysia Plan: 1991-1995, pg. 415.) Women's participation in the labour force has increased significantly since the Sixth Plan began. Between 1970 and 1990 women's participation rate increased slowly, from 31% in 1970 to 32.7% in 1980, 34.6% in 1985 and 35% in 1990. In 1993 it was 47%. (Mid-Term Review of the Sixth Malaysia Plan: 1991-1995, 239) Thus, increasingly women are entering the labour force. This has impacted on their role within the family.

There have been other changes which have influenced family life. Over the past twenty years there has been a significant rural-urban migration, as well as resettlement programmes engaging rural communities in land development and rehabilitation schemes. These have disrupted the traditional extended family structure; many families now live as nuclear families. This means that women lack the traditional supports in terms of child care, thus creating an increase in the demand for alternative care of young children.

Since the 1970s, and due to the emphasis given to the importance of education, there has also been an increased awareness among parents, government and non-governmental agencies (NGOs) of the importance of preschool education for five- and six-year-old children. Given parental demand, there is a rapidly increasing involvement of the private sector in providing preschool programmes, particularly in terms of bringing in imported models and materials. In addition, there is a tendency for many in the private sector to provide commercialised programmes which are appealing to parents, preschool teachers and caregivers, but which may not be sound in terms of child development principles.

Besides the increasing demand for programmes for children from zero to six years old, there is now a demand for afterschool care for children of working parents.

It is in relation to this changing situation in Malaysia that the Government of Malaysia was interested in undertaking a study of needs and formulating an ECCD policy that would support the national development goals. The study provided an understanding of the strengths of ECCD provision within Malaysia. It also indicated issues to be addressed to enhance the capacity of government, non-governmental agencies, the private sector and the public to promote the well-being of all young children. As a result of the study the following set of recommendations was formulated, based on findings from the study.

### Recommendations

1. At the present time Malaysia lacks a comprehensive policy to support the overall development of young children as they make the transition from home to care outside the home, to preschool and then into the primary school. Current services are fragmented and there is a lack of interface among the agencies currently serving young children and their families.

Therefore it is recommended that: *a comprehensive and integrated ECD policy for Malaysia be adopted to meet the needs of children from conception through the early primary school years. The policy should:*

- a. be related to Vision 2020, and the National Development Policy,
- b. address important national issues, for example:
  - challenges associated with the quality of life desired for Malaysians, including the strengthening of the family and moral, ethical and spiritual values,
  - the support and enhancement of the National Plan of Action related to the World Summit on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children,
  - challenges associated with increasing the labour force participation among women for the industrialization programme, and the implications for the family.

Thereby, ECD contributes to Human Resources Development.

2. Currently ECD services are fragmented, addressing only selected ECD needs.

Therefore, it is recommended that: *a review of current legislation affecting young children and their families be undertaken.*

3. There is a lack of knowledge about what happens to children who are not in registered child care and preschool programmes, and what happens for children when they are not attending child care, preschool or lower primary school.

Therefore, it is recommended that: *a study be undertaken to more completely document the situation and needs of young children.*

4. There are well-developed Preschool Curriculum Guidelines for children 4-6 years of age. There is no equivalent curriculum guideline for children under the age of four.

Therefore, it is recommended that: *comprehensive, integrated Curriculum Guidelines be developed for children from birth to six years of age that interface with the Primary School Curriculum.*

5. ECD planning and practice must rest on a comprehensive and integrated data base. At the present time there is no comprehensive data bank on ECD needs and provision. It is important to have a better understanding of needs as

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related to provision

Therefore, it is recommended that: the Ministry of Health, through additions to their Home-based Child Health Card, collect relevant data on children 0-4

Further, it is recommended that: the Ministry of Education maintain responsibility for the data base for chil-

dren aged 1-9. Agencies providing services to this age group should channel their data to this Ministry

Further, it is recommended that: data for target groups like immigrant children should be collected by the Ministry of Home Affairs and channelled to the Ministry of Health or the Ministry of Education for the respective age group.

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6. A cornerstone of effective early childhood programmes internationally is parent and community involvement in all aspects of the programme. The study revealed that this is lacking in most programmes.

Therefore, it is recommended that: *the concept of parent involvement be broadened to a concept of parent participation which respects and strengthens the parent's role in the child's development and establishes linkages between the home, early childhood programmes and children's transition into the primary school.*

Further, it is recommended that: *parent and community support and involvement be mobilized in creating awareness, planning, implementing, and sharing the cost of ECD programmes.*

It is also recommended that: *media be involved in promoting a greater understanding of child development, and the responsibility and role of the private sector in ECD provision.*

7. Training is a key component in the successful implementation of any curriculum. The study revealed that current training, for the most part is inadequate.

Therefore it is recommended that: *a national ECD training system be established which provides a framework for the development of training packages, certification for trainees, accreditation of trainers and training centres, decentralized resource centres, and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating training programmes.*

8. Research and evaluation provide data important in the planning process. Across ECD programmes there is a lack of evaluation of programme effectiveness and impact. Further, there is a gap between academic research and its application in terms of programming.

Therefore it is recommended that the following research be pursued:

- the impact of available models (e.g. home and community-based as well as centre-based) on children's later growth and development
- the cost-effectiveness of different programme approaches.

9. At the present time government provision of ECD is heavily subsidized.

Therefore, it is recommended that: *in line with government policy to increase the private sector participation in all public services, strategies be developed, which will shift the financing of ECD from Government to the private sector, the community and parents.*

Further, it is recommended that: *alternative models of financing ECD be explored, including taxation, the development of Trusts, and philanthropic initiatives. The 1994 Budget includes a tax benefit for businesses offering ECD services. The effectiveness of the approach needs to be evaluated.*

To address the issues identified and the recommendations made thus far,

It is recommended that: *as an interim measure, a*



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*National Early Childhood Development Council be created within the Prime Minister's Department for the purpose of formulation, conceptualizing and overseeing ECD programmes in the various sectors (government, non-governmental and private). The Council should be supported by a strong Secretariat with technical skills related to ECD. In the long term the Council should be institutionalised within a major Ministry.*



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The draft policy that resulted from the study reads:

### A National ECD Policy

It is known that

the foundation for children's growth and development is established within the first few years of life and that learning begins at birth,

Further, it has been demonstrated that

- conducive and stimulating environments that enhance young children's physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual development lead to holistic and balanced individuals, and that
- investments in early childhood development modify social and economic inequalities, addressing the issues of accessibility, equity and equality, and that

—quality early childhood programmes provide an environment which supports the transmission of cultural, moral and religious values that are the underpinnings of a fully moral and ethical society.

Thus, with a focus on Vision 2020 and the nine central strategic challenges, the Government of Malaysia has made a commitment to the promotion of the importance of early childhood years, from conception through the early primary grades. Further, in accordance with government policy, close collaboration will be sought with the private sector in the implementation of appropriate early childhood programmes.

The recommendations of the Task Force are currently under review by the Government of Malaysia.



UNICEF/2307/Bert Demmers

### SOUTH AFRICA

The motivation for the study in South Africa<sup>1</sup> was different from the motivation in Malaysia. The study was begun a year and a half before the first free election in 1994. The impetus for the study was the high rates of repetition and dropout in education for a large percentage of the population. It was recognized that once the new government came into power there would be political demands to level the playing field. Therefore the new South African government would need to consider how to ensure that all children were ready to enter the first year of primary school.

A Study Team, consisting of eight ECCD specialists from South Africa and an international consultant, undertook an examination of the situation of young children in South Africa, looking particularly at the kinds of supports that are available to them and making recommendations in relation to how they can benefit more effectively from basic education. The Team was charged specifically with making recommendations in regards to the value and feasibility of creating a preschool programme for five-year-olds. While the Study Team did in fact conclude that an essential part of the strategy for upgrading education is to bring five year olds into the education system, the team felt that if this were to be the sole focus of state input to early childhood development, it would be too little too late for the majority of young children. Furthermore it fails to take into account the particular vulnerability of the first three years of life and the particular needs of working parents

The Study Team also believed that a preschool year for five-year-olds could only be effective if it was part of a larger strategy designed to address the roles that government, non-governmental agencies, the private sector, communities and parents should play in supporting children's growth and development. Thus the recommendations placed the creation of a programme for five-year-olds in a broader, more appropriate context.

## Results of the Study

The study included information on the following:

- The evidence from South Africa on the effects of preschool on repetition and dropout and on nonschool outcomes was summarized.
- The key skills that all children should have acquired by the end of the preschooling period were identified and elaborated upon.
- The types of skills required of preschool staff in order to support the development of children's skills were defined, and an appropriate cost-effective mix of staffing was proposed.
- There was an examination of the various 'bridging' modules being offered at the time to see to what extent these provided the skills children needed, and an assessment was made of the modules' strengths and weaknesses, including their impact on repetition and dropout.
- A mapping of the preschool provider network was undertaken. This included a description of the provision of ECCD programmes by various government and NGO programmes and the number of children served, and the geographic spread of provision. The process also allowed for the identification of programmes or programme elements (e.g. initial training, ongoing support, instructional materials) that could be used as models for future expansion of ECCD provision.
- Recommendations were made in relation to an appropriate cost-effective mix of preschool staff, and the availability of training for different levels of staff, and cost per trainee was determined. Given the capacity at that point in time an estimate was made of how many teachers could be trained in a 12-month period. There was also a specification of the conditions under which the existing training capacity could be expanded.
- The roles that government, NGOs, communities and parents should play were defined in relation to: setting standards and monitoring provision, the development of curriculum, training, paying staff, providing physical facilities,

and covering the costs of recurrent materials. Also, recommendations were made in terms of the institutional arrangements that were needed in order to coordinate preschool if it were to be offered by government.

- An assessment was made of the recurrent costs associated with the existing models of preschool provision, and a description was provided of how these costs were being financed.
- A description was provided of the positions of the then-current government, political movements, parties and extra-parliamentary groups in relation to preschool provision.
- The key policy issues to be resolved by a new democratically-elected government were identified and, where appropriate, recommendations were made for consideration by the new authorities.
- An intervention strategy and programme were proposed to address the demand for preschool services over time. On the basis of different models of provision, the cost of a new government offering a year of preschool to every child in the country was estimated. Cost estimates were also made for a gradual increase in ECCD provision over a five-year time period.

In essence, the Task Force recommended that the government, in partnership with NGOs, the private sector, trade unions, the community and families, invest in the provision of early childhood services for children from birth through the early primary years. The recommendations focussed specifically on the provision of support to early childhood development programmes for selected children from birth through age four, and the provision of universal preprimary education for five-year-olds prior to entry into the formal school system. However, the report made the point that it was important that this year not be offered in lieu of or apart from school reform at the junior primary level.

The recommendations made as a result of the study were based on resources already developed within South Africa. For example, there is a strong community of non-governmental agencies which have developed appropriate curriculum for young children, and a variety of outreach models allowing for the provision of services to isolated rural areas. The variety reflects a sensitivity to differing regional and local needs within generally accepted principles of development which seek to redress historical imbalances through appropriate and cost-effective strategies.

The NGOs involved in early childhood development (ECD) programmes have also developed extensive training systems that 1) provide ECD

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staff with appropriate skills and knowledge to work with young children and their families, and 2) enable communities to take ownership of ECD programmes and sustain them over time. It is these strengths that will be built upon in the creation of a national system of support to ECD programmes.

It was the belief of the Study Team that over the next five years the current training agencies could develop the capacity to train the required number of ECD workers, provided that they were given the necessary resources to do so, and provided that appropriate linkages were established with formal teacher training institutions. Within the recommended Plan of Action the services provided by current Resource and Training Agencies will be expanded and strengthened.

### Selected Recommendations

- Support for the development, expansion, management and funding of early childhood provision is the joint responsibility of the state, provincial and local governments, the private sector, the community and parents
- Responsibility for the development of policies and guidelines for the implementation of early childhood development programmes should be the responsibility of central government
- A Department of Early Childhood Development (ECD)

should be created within the Ministry of Education and Training, responsible for creating policy and guidelines.

- Curriculum guidelines for early childhood development should be established by the National Institute for Curriculum Development (NICD), taking into consideration children's needs in health, nutrition, education and psychosocial development.
- Responsibility for interpretation and implementation of guidelines and policies for ECD programmes should be based at the Provincial level.
- Implementation of ECD programmes should be the responsibility of Local Authorities and ECD management committees. They would be responsible for stimulating the development of ECD programmes, registering and monitoring the activities of individual early childhood programmes, and they would be involved in direct provision
- At the programme level, parents will have responsibility for management of early childhood provision. They would be responsible for establishing and maintaining the facilities, and paying of the teachers whose salary would be provided through a combination of state subsidies, local funding and parent fees.
- An Interministerial ECD Committee should be created to promote integration across sectors of services in support of young children and their families.
- A Reception Class for five-year-olds should be created. This is to be phased in over a period of five years. By the end of the fifth year 100% of the five-year-olds should have access to a Reception Class
- Resource and Training Centres need to be established in

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each Province to provide training and support to ECD programmes. Current NGOs can be accredited and contracted to serve as RTCs. These should be subsidized by government.

- A Reception Year for five year olds should not be implemented in isolation. It must be linked to reform within Junior Primary.
- Alternative ways of reaching those under 5 need to continue to be explored

The costs of implementing the recommendations were calculated. The per capita costs of provision, inclusive of the costs of facilities and the training of teachers and appropriate support staff,

57. The care and development of infants and young children must be the foundation of social relations and the starting point of a national human resource development strategy. The national and provincial Departments of Education will have specific roles to play in this field. They cannot undertake the full responsibility for ECD, which is a multi-disciplinary field. Instead, the national Department of Education will liaise with the Departments of National Health and Welfare in order to establish an inter-departmental committee or working group to develop their joint interests in policy for the infant and young child.

58. The Department of Education has particular responsi-



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decrease as more children have access to the services. In the first year there would be state subsidies of ECCD services for 579,000 children, from birth to 5 years of age, in a variety of settings. The average per capita cost is R1,960 (US\$ 653/year). By the end of the fifth year more than 3 million children would have access to ECCD provision, at an average cost of R1,504 (US\$ 501) per child per annum. This is a small investment to make in the foundation upon which a nation is being built.

When the new Government came into power the Report was submitted to those formulating government policy. What follows is what was written into the Draft White Paper on Education and Training. (Staatskoerant Government Gazette, 1994)

bility for the education components of ECD, especially the development of policy frameworks, norms and standards in relation to curricula and teacher education, including paraprofessional training.

59. The new national department is planned to have a directorate for early Childhood Development, and Lower Primary Education, in the light of the continuity in developmental approaches to the young child and the need for a reshaping of curricula and teaching methodology for the early years of school. Hopefully, similar units will be established in provincial Departments of Education, which will undertake similar liaison functions with Health and Welfare.

60. The new national directorate will have the major responsibility for developing policy for the reception phase, the first year of compulsory general education programme, in consultation with its provincial counterparts



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These new provincial units would therefore take up the massive challenge of spearheading the phasing in of the policy, in conjunction with NGO providers and accredited training agencies

61. However, before the policy process could properly begin, it would be necessary to consult with all national stakeholders in the field, including the national representative body of ECD practitioners, in order to develop an appropriate statutory consultative group to advise on ECD policy, resourcing and development.

62. State funds will not be sufficient to mount a major developmental programme in 1995, but the seed money should be made available, as in the new ABET programme, to begin the startup phase and attract other funders. This process needs to be driven through a partnership of local government, community, business, worker

and development agency interests, in order to build public awareness and develop a funding strategy for a national ECD programme.

The South Africa case study provides a good example of how recommendations can be turned into policy language. The policy has not yet been put into place and implementation has not begun, so it is not possible to evaluate the effort. However a start has been made toward a policy that unifies diverse efforts into a cohesive nationwide response to the needs of young children.

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<sup>1</sup> The material for this case study has been taken from Malaysian Early Childhood Development Study by J. L. Evans and K. Ismail, 1994, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: UNICEF.

<sup>2</sup> The material presented in the South African case study was taken from the Report of the South African Study on Early Childhood Development, published by the Centre for Education Policy Development, with support from the World Bank and USAID Johannesburg, 1994.

Those of us who are advocates of Early Childhood Development spend much of our energy promoting the concept of the *whole child*. We point out that children need more integrated attention than just nutritional help or cognitive stimulation. We ask decisionmakers, programme providers, and parents to consider ways to support all dimensions of the child's growth, and to pay attention to enriching the environment in which that child grows. Applying that same kind of thinking to the field of ECCD the Consultative Group promotes ways to link research, policy and programming, so they can have beneficial synergistic impacts on each other. Research is not just an intellectual exercise; it is a process of refining our understanding of young children and their needs so that we can be more responsive to them. Quality programming is not just a curriculum exercise designed at a desk; it arises from experiences, knowledge about the particular children being served, and awareness of the specific social conditions for which it is being designed. Similarly, as Judith Evans mentioned in *Creating a Shared Vision*, policy does not exist in a vacuum. It should be formulated with awareness of the people it will affect, and should be based on experience, research and programming. As proponents of ECCD we are searching for ways to integrate research, policy, and programming so that they can truly benefit each other. In the following short excerpt adapted from his preface to the book, *Human Development and Family Studies in India. An Agenda for Research and Policy* (Saraswathi and Kaur), Robert G. Myers suggests some possible ways of viewing research, to take into account its interrelationships with programming and policy.

## The Interconnections Between Child Development Research, Policy and Programming

ROBERT G. MYERS

The most frequent model used to connect research with policy and programming is one in which research results are first created, then communicated from the researcher to the potential user. The communication may be face-to-face or may occur in written or visual form. Or, the research results may be *brokered* by an intermediary acting on behalf of the researcher, such as a policy institute or a professional association engaged in lobbying. It may be, also, that *basic* research findings are first transformed into an application or technology and that application is then passed on to practitioners.

This traditional way of thinking about research and its practical consequences has several characteristics. First, in this conception, the researcher and the user are always separate. Second, and following from the first, knowledge is always transferred from one person to another. Third, research results are first produced, then disseminated (perhaps after being repackaged or turned into a curriculum, technology or application).

When judging the success of the transfer of knowledge to action, there is also a tendency to associate specific pieces of research or specific outcomes of research with specific policies or actions in the world of policy and practice.

This way of approaching the relationship between research and its use in practice is not wrong. Such interfaces occur and they can and should be fostered. However, this view of how to use research is limiting and, in my opinion, probably does not represent the principal way in which research gets converted to action. What are alternative conceptions and what do they imply?

One alternative model is that researchers might seek ways of informing a broad public. This is important for two reasons. First, it gets away from the assumption that all actions occur through governments. Research can be used directly by the public and can be *empowering*. For example, the successes of the Dr. Spock baby book in the United States, the best selling book on early stimulation in Chile, and similar popular publications in other countries testify

to the potential efficacy of repackaging research results for use directly by the public. A second, less often recognized reason for using the public as an audience is that, in democracies, citizens put pressure on governments to change their policies. While this change may occur over long periods of time, such a use of research results can have an important impact on policies. In this case, the journalist, popular writer or even the television actor may become important allies of the researcher who wants to contribute to better practice.

Directing research results to the public barely breaks with the traditional way of thinking about the research/practice nexus described above. It goes beyond the traditional tendency to associate specific research findings with specific changes in policy. It also opens up the timeframe, offering a different way to influence policy, practice and those who set policy and plan programmes. However, the approach continues to separate researcher from user and is linear in conception.

There is another, more radical way of thinking about the production and use of knowledge. In this view, the researcher and the practitioner come back together; they are one and the same. In this non-linear view, the dissemination and use of knowledge begins to occur with the conceptualization of a research project. Knowledge is used and disseminated

over the course of the research process. It is also embodied in the people who carry out the research and who then use the knowledge, without having to transfer what was learned to others.

We have a basis for this view in the literature on research utilization showing that, "...for a study to exert a strong conceptual influence on practitioners, interactions between researchers and practitioners must occur not only on completion of the study, but also during and, ideally, before the conduct of the study. Also, many of these contacts must be face-to-face." (Huberman, 1990, pg. 365) What is still missing from this formulation is the explicit notion of practitioner as researcher, and vice versa. It is only then that the possibility of a tie between research and use is maximized.

In this more radical view, we are led to think as much about who carries out the research and about what they will do with the experience as about the specific content of it. We are led to the idea of participation in research as a form of education. One common example is when graduate students are involved in research (policy-oriented or not) with the idea that they will embody the resulting awareness and move into positions as practitioners, using what they have learned in the course of the research. But it is far from being the only case. For instance, there are situations in which knowledge acquired in research is put to pol-



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When practitioners and students engage in research, this experience influences their future contributions to the field.



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**Participatory research can be designed to include stakeholders, such as parents, classroom teachers and even the children themselves.**

icy and programme use because researchers themselves move into policy or programme positions. There are also instances when practitioners are incorporated into research with the idea that the experience will inform their own work.

In this view, attempts to incorporate practitioners directly into research become as important as incorporating researchers into practice. One can imagine, for instance, cases of classroom teachers who are involved in continuing education or training that uses their own classroom as the laboratory for research. This is seldom done. Given the proper atmosphere and using methodologies that link action to reflection, such participatory research can overcome the possible problems of bias in observation, can be done without sacrificing rigor, and can lead to the immediate use of research results.

Incorporating policymakers into research is less common and more challenging, but it may be possible to find ways to achieve it. For example, exchanges can be set up where not only do ECCD students carry out internships in government offices where policies are made and programmes are directed, but also where responsible individuals in government offices (or non governmental organizations) can be provided with

similar study opportunities. These study opportunities could revolve around projects directly related to their work and around research that would inform their work.

Participatory research can be designed to include parents, teachers, supervisors, programme planners and policymakers. Since each of these groups has much to contribute to our understanding of young children and the experiences which support their growth, it makes sense for ECCD researchers to draw on them in their research projects. Similarly, it makes sense for researchers to reach out in a myriad of ways to (and to be sought out by) these influential people, to make sure that the interconnections between research, policy and programming are strong and vital.

In the book for which this Preface was written, reporting on the results of a Symposium<sup>1</sup> that explored the interface between research and policy, several suggestions were made to facilitate that interface. The suggestions were based on the central notion that "the key to effective linkages...lies in better communication between researchers, policymakers, programme planners and the public". To communicate better it is suggested that:

- there is a need to communicate research results



without using technical jargon;

- research brokers be identified and a process of *lobbying* be strengthened in which professional organizations and national research institutes take on a more active advocacy role;
- use of the media should be increased, particularly in reaching the public;
- two-way channels be provided that include mechanisms for identifying gaps and the kinds of questions that need to be addressed from time to time;
- an interdisciplinary task force be established by the government to evolve a comprehensive framework for guiding research efforts, monitoring the translation of research findings into implications for policy and programming, and coordinating dissemination.

Other specific suggestions for improving the linkages included:

- encouraging policy-oriented research;
- building evaluation into programmes from the start and on a continuous basis;
- sensitizing graduate students to the importance of policy-oriented research and to the importance of making the linkages, by introducing appropriate concepts in methods courses, by offering seminars for drawing policy relevance from existing research, by encouraging research, and by establishing internships in government bodies or advocacy groups;
- seeking a greater understanding of the policy and programme processes and then selecting research topics with a *high impact potential*. In general these will be topics that are not only of current interest, but also ones that must be treated in a culturally relevant way, in context;
- paying greater attention to research that delves into why some programmes succeed and others fail.

For the most part, the above suggestions depend on some sort of interface by researchers directly with policymakers and planners. Major exceptions to this are the suggestions concerning the use of the media to reach the public, the incorporation of researchers into the evaluation of on-going programmes, and the encouragement of students to become involved in research with a policy orientation. I would like to stress these exceptions precisely because they do not depend on communicating research results directly or through brokers.

While it is often difficult to make these more direct connections and build the desired partnerships (It may require repeated invitations and personal lobbying to get individuals from the policy or programming realm to participate in research meetings, people from research and policy to participate in programming meetings, etc.) it is well worth the effort.

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<sup>1</sup> The Symposium was titled, New Directions in Human Development and Family Studies: Research, Policy and Programme Interfaces. It was held November 8-10, 1990 at the M.S. University of Baroda, Baroda, India.

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*The following article by Kagitcibasi, Bekman and Goksel illustrates how an applied research project carried out with scientific rigor by academic researchers can, over time, have an important effect on policy. It can provide the basis for a new and large-scale initiative, and for cooperation between governmental, non-governmental and international organizations. Although the research results presented here are of interest in and of themselves, our main purpose in including the article in this issue of the Notebook is to show how these results have been translated into action. The first section of the article describes the original research project and its extremely encouraging results, the second section indicates how the design of the original project was modified and fashioned into an action programme.*

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# A Multipurpose Model of Nonformal Education

## The Mother-Child Education Programme

CIGDEM KAGITCIBASI, SEVDA BEKMAN & AYLAK GOKSEL

In Turkey, the Mother-Child Education Programme (MCEP) has introduced a new approach to early childhood education, which targets and has many positive benefits for both the mother and the child. Born from a research project conducted over a ten-year period, it has advanced to form the basis of a major government educational policy. It has also led to the establishment of the Mother-Child Education Foundation and has served as the incentive for a new collaboration between UNICEF, the Ministry of Education and the Mother-Child Education Foundation.

The Mother-Child Education Programme originated in a desire to provide early enrichment to children from disadvantaged environments and to strengthen their immediate environment. It thus targeted the enhancement of the overall development of preschool-aged children within their immediate social context. The Mother-Child Education Programme, as a model of nonformal education, is based on a two-tiered approach which aims to provide early enrichment to the young child and training and support to the adult (mother). The dual focus of intervention is both the positive development of the child and the empowerment of the mother. Thus it involves both preschool and adult education.

In the literature it is well documented that interven-

tion programmes, especially for women in development, should be multipurpose, directed at the intersecting needs of women and children. (Engle, 1980; Evans, 1985) Multipurpose programmes are found to create greater motivation for participation. Programmes that integrate different components such as family planning, mother-child health, nutrition and school preparation, are found to be more effective than programmes with a singular purpose. (Myers 1992) The Mother-Child Education Programme is an example of a successful multipurpose programme.

The state of early childhood development and education programmes in Turkey calls for cost-effective programmes which will reach large numbers of children from socioeconomically disadvantaged environments who are in need of early education. Early education in this instance can help to bridge the gap between these children and their more advantaged peers when they start their schooling. Similarly, women with a low level of education, low status in the family and with low contribution to economic life deserve priority. Community-based and culturally-sensitive multipurpose programmes have a higher chance of being accepted and successfully applied on a large scale when they are designed to offer solutions to social problems in the country.

As mentioned above, an *empowerment* model underlies the Mother-Child Education Programme. The goal is to offer children and mothers enrichment, by providing support for their already existing strengths and building on them at both the individual and family level. This contrasts with *deficiency* models that focus on parents' shortcomings. The mother is the key fig-

ure in this context since she is empowered to provide sustained improvement in her child's as well as her own well-being.

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*Programmes that integrate different components such as family planning, mother-child health, nutrition and school preparation, are found to be more effective than programmes with a singular purpose.*

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The programme is a community-based intervention, capitalizing upon women's networks through the use of group discussion sessions. Especially in socio-cultural contexts where close-knit family and community ties exist, as in Turkey and many parts of the developing world, it makes sense for an enrichment programme to build on these ties as support mechanisms. (Kagıtcıbası, 1988) These mechanisms would be expected to continue to provide support to the women after the completion of the programme.

## **The Turkish Early Enrichment Project**

The origins of the Mother-Child Education Programme lie in the "Turkish Early Enrichment Project", a research project conducted between 1982-1986 by Cigdem Kagıtcıbası, Diane Sunar and Sevdâ Bekman of Bogazici University. (Kagıtcıbası, Sunar & Bekman, 1988) The project, involving early childhood enrichment and mother training in low income areas of Istanbul, set out to assess the impact of an optimal combination of educational preschool care and home intervention on the overall development of socioeconomically disadvantaged urban children. Both centre-based and home-based enrichment were studied, separately and in combination.

The study was conducted in five low-income shanty town areas of Istanbul where the majority of the population were blue-collar workers or involved in the marginal economy. The population was mostly of rural origins, having migrated to the city in search of employment. The main reason for the choice of these areas was the existence of factories employing over 300 women and thus required by law to provide a child care unit. Six daycare centres catering to low-income children were chosen. The children were three and five years of age. Of the sample, one third of the children were enrolled in educational nursery schools, one third in custodial care centres and the

other third in home care with no preschool education. Some of the children in each group were randomly selected and given a home intervention in the form of a Mother Training programme.

Mother Training had two elements: a programme to foster social and personality development of the child and a programme to foster the cognitive development of the child. The former was addressed through group discussions on topics designed to increase the mother's sensitivity to the child's social and emotional needs and to help her to foster the child's social and personality growth. The programme to foster cognitive development was a Turkish translation and adaptation of HIPPY (Home Intervention Programme for Preschool Youngsters) developed by the Research Institute of Innovation in Education at Hebrew University, Jerusalem. (Lombard, 1981) As a home-based enrichment approach, the programme focused on three main areas of cognitive development (language, sensory and perceptual discrimination skills and problem-solving) with materials provided for educational activities in each of these areas.

In the second and third years of the project, the Mother Training Programme consisted of biweekly home visits and group meetings that were held on alternate weeks. The programme to foster social and personality development of the child took place in the



**The programme trained mothers to support the social and emotional as well as the cognitive development of the child.**

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fortnightly group meetings through guided group discussions. The topics in the first year were based on children's health, nutrition and creative play activities. In the second year, the stress was on mother-child interaction.

The original project lasted four years (1982-1986). In the first year of the project baseline assessments were carried out with mothers and children using developmental tests, observations and interviews. In the second and third years of the project the intervention was introduced to a randomly-selected group of the mothers, and in the fourth year reassessments were conducted. These fourth year assessments were used to determine the short-term effects of the programme. Six years after the end of the original study (and ten years after the start of the project) a follow-up study was conducted in 1991-1992 to assess the long-term effects of the project. As detailed below, the findings have been positive and impressive.

## Effects of the Applied Research Project

### Short-term Effects

The project set out to study the overall development of the child, rather than only his/her cognitive development, as is commonly done. For this reason a variety of assessment measures were employed. Determination of the results of the four-year study was based on the cognitive, personality and social development of the child, the mother's orientation to the child and direct effects on the mother.

#### ■ Effects on the child

The results were striking: significant differences were found in cognitive development between children whose mothers had undergone mother training and those who had not. Those who had benefited most were the children in custodial or home care, rather than the children who were already attending an educational care centre, suggesting a "ceiling effect" of educational enrichment. Significant differences were found between children whose mothers had been trained and those who hadn't on various cognitive measures: IQ scores, school grades, standardized tests of academic achievement and subtests of Weschler intelligence tests. Children whose mothers were trained also exhibited positive effects on their social and personality development, displaying less dependency, less aggressiveness, better self-concept and better school adjustment.

#### ■ Effects on the mother

The benefits of the programme were also reflected in the mother. Trained mothers were more verbal, less punitive, and more responsive to their children and

had greater interaction with their children. Mothers who had been trained valued autonomous behaviour of the child more than the nontrained mothers and were more cognitively stimulating. A great deal of research and theory in developmental psychology has stressed the importance of the above orientations in childrearing and discipline for the cognitive, moral and personality development of the child.

Not only did the Mother Training Programme have effects on the mother's style of interaction with her child, thus leading to changes in the child's environment and behaviour, it also had direct effects on the mother herself. Trained mothers reported a different pattern of interaction with their husbands than non-trained mothers. Trained mothers were more likely to share decision-making with their spouses on subjects such as birth control and child discipline than non-trained mothers. They also enjoyed a greater degree of communication and role-sharing with their spouses, the latter being evident, for example, in husbands helping with household chores.

### Long-term Effects

A study of the literature on intervention programmes has shown that while short-term gains in cognitive ability have been observed, these gains were found to dissipate in the longer-term. Mother training introduced in this project attempted to overcome this problem by initiating changes in the mothers' behaviour, expectations and values in order to constitute changes in the child's environment. The dissipation of early gains found in intervention studies in the literature has been due at least partly to exclusive concentration on cognitive skills and focusing only on the child, abstracting him/her from his environment. (Kagitcibasi, 1983; Bronfenbrenner, 1974) In this way the child is left to rely on his/her limited resources when the intervention ends. When the child's environment is supported and changed, however, it can in turn help sustain the gains.

Although the short-term results of the project were very encouraging, only long-term investigations could indicate whether mother empowerment can ensure that with continued support from the mother, the maintenance and extension of the positive development of the child brought about by the intervention programme can be sustained.

#### ■ Long-term effects on the child

In 1991, six years after the completion of the intervention programme a follow-up study was conducted to investigate the long-term effects of the project. 225 mothers of the original sample of 255 were found; 217 mothers and their children participated in the follow-up study. Home intervention in the form of mother training was found to have sustained effects. A most important finding had to do with school attainment. At the time of the follow-up study compulsory school-



ing was five years in Turkey. Therefore in low-income areas especially, those children who are not successful in school drop out after they finish primary school (five years). Continuing with schooling is an important factor for future success and social mobility. Of the young adolescents (13–15 years of age), 86% of the mother-trained group were still in school, compared with 67% of the nontrained group, the difference being highly significant ( $p = .002$ ).

The children in the mother-trained group surpassed the nontrained group on a vocabulary test, showing higher cognitive capacity.<sup>2</sup>

Also, the children in the mother-trained group showed better school performance than the nontrained group over the five years of primary school. They also manifested more positive attitudes related to schooling and better self-concept. For example they felt that they could be the best in class if they studied hard, that the teachers and they, themselves, were pleased with their school performance; and they gave fewer nonacademic reasons for continuing in school, such as "having nothing better to do" or "parents wanted them to attend school", than the nontrained group.

The adolescents whose mothers had been trained reported more positive retrospective memories of their mothers (from childhood). They remembered their mothers as talking to them, being more appreciative of them, more consoling and less likely to use physical punishment. These adolescents also showed better social integration and autonomy, in terms of their ideas being accepted by their friends and making their own decisions.

More children of the trained mothers than the nontrained mothers believed that they were prepared for school at the beginning. Since two-thirds of both groups had been in preschool, this difference between the trained and nontrained group is likely to be due to mother training. This suggests that the early family experiences of the mother-trained and nontrained groups had been quite different, leading to more positive long-term outcomes for the mother-trained children.

#### ■ Long-term effects on the mother

Mother training resulted in a positive change in the mother, both in empowering the mother to provide a more supportive and stimulating environment for the overall development of the child and also in long-term benefits to the mothers themselves. In terms of mother-child interaction, mothers who had been trained reported having better relations with their children, such as understanding the child, talking problems over with the child, and not beating the child as much as the nontrained group. They also had better family relations and had higher educational expectations for their children. These results from the mother interviews confirmed the adolescents' self-reports.

#### ■ Direct effects on mothers

Trained mothers were more likely to have the last

word in making decisions (48%) than untrained mothers (38%). A significant difference was found between the two groups indicating the higher status of trained mothers in the home, as measured by an index combining shared decision-making, communication and role-sharing with their spouses (also used in the fourth year of the original study). Trained mothers were found to read newspapers and magazines more than untrained mothers, employed contraceptive methods more than untrained mothers and were more knowledgeable on issues of family planning. These mothers seemed to utilize available services more and had a better evaluation of their economic situation than untrained mothers.

Thus the programme seemed to enable women to communicate more effectively with their children, to prepare more positive environments for their overall development and success, as well as to achieve better relations with their family and to increase their status in their family.

## Discussion of the Effects of the Project

The long-term effects of the project seem tied to its holistic and contextual focus. Given the key role of the mother in the utilization of resources for the production of family health and well-being, especially regarding the development of children, it makes good sense to target the mother for intervention. The programme results indicate how nonformal early childhood education and parent education can be integrated and how the mother can be empowered to promote her child's as well as her own well-being.

The project built and strengthened women's networks through the group discussion sessions. These networks were expected to continue, providing support to the women after completion of the programme. Another reason for the sustained effects is the nature of the changes in women and in their interactive styles with their children and spouses. The mother training programme provided the participating mothers with better interpersonal skills; these newly acquired skills helped them to solve problems more effectively, which can be expected to take root and be self-sustaining (Kagıtcıbası 1992).

The follow-up study of the project, especially, has far-reaching policy implications. Most important, it has constituted a crucial test of the value of the original research project as a model for further replication. In countries like Turkey, where there is a need for large-scale early support and training programmes, it has not often been clear which approach is most effective, due partly to the lack of long-term evaluation studies (Evidence is often based on Western experience which may or may not be generalizable to different cultural contexts.) The programme offered an example of the great potential of a culturally sensitive, contextual approach, rather than an individualistic approach, in supporting child (and mother) develop-



**In Turkey only 7% of the children attend any type of preschool before entering primary school.**  
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ment. Specifically, the child was reached *in context*, through the mother, and the mother was reached *in context*, through the community-based mothers discussion groups. Such parent-family oriented interactive learning experiences promote both the child's overall development and the empowerment of the woman since the context is mobilized to support the target persons.

While the aim of the original project was to investigate whether mother training constituted a useful supplement to educational nursery schools in order to create a "comprehensive preschool education", the results of this study, based on the variables measured suggest that centre based intervention and home-based intervention programmes may be considered as alternatives to each other rather than viewing them only as complementary elements.

In countries like Turkey where state resources are directed toward formal education, concentrating on primary schooling, preschool education is bound to have low priority. In Turkey, only 7% of the children attend any type of preschool before entering primary school. Therefore there is a need to develop cost-effective alternative models to formal preschool edu-

cation. Adult education programmes can be utilized for this purpose. They can help to overcome problems encountered due to educational and economic disadvantage. This is important, considering Turkey is a country which does not have a widespread system of early childhood education, although it has a very large number of children who are at risk of developmental deficits because of socioeconomic disadvantage. Since most preschool programmes are located in the larger cities and are mainly private tuition-charging centres, rural children and those from socioeconomically disadvantaged sectors have limited access to preschool education, although they need early enrichment the most. (Bekman, 1990) Centre-based educational programmes, while producing desired effects in terms of the child's cognitive and social benefits, are expensive to implement on a large scale.

Beside the positive effects of the Mother-Child Education Programme, the cost effectiveness of the model also makes it attractive for wide-scale use. Home intervention is a highly effective and relatively low-cost strategy for early enrichment. Expensive institutional investment is not required, as the most important resource used is the human resource.

Furthermore, being community-based, the Mother-Child Education Programme has the inherent flexibility to benefit from the indigenous culture and to be culturally relevant.

Through enriching the child's environment, this approach has the potential to promote self-sustaining changes and growth.

## **From Project to Programme**

In order for the research project to move beyond its limited status to application on a broader scale, a number of things had to happen. First, the content needed to be adjusted so it could be more easily administered and could be applied in various contexts and with groups with differing needs. To this end, a new Cognitive Training Programme was developed to replace HIPPY. (Lombard, 1981) The new Training Programme (Kagıtcıbası and Bekman 1991) was condensed into a span of 25 weeks and was directed specifically at children in the year before they begin formal schooling. This revised model was tried out separately in both Ministry of Education and nonministry settings even before the research project ended, and was further adjusted based on these experiences.

The revised organization and content involve 25 weekly group meetings of around two hours duration. Each group is made up of approximately twenty mothers. The Mother Enrichment part of the programme is realized in the form of group discussions guided by a trained group leader during the first part of every week's meeting. The mothers are expected to attend every week and they do make an effort to do so, which is a constructive action on behalf of the mother. The mother's participation in the discussions teaches her to develop effective communication with the child, increasing her sensitivity to the child's needs, aimed to equip her to promote the child's healthy physical and psychosocial development. The mothers ask questions, generate answers and express opinions related to their own experiences in the discussions, guided by the group leader. Group dynamics techniques are used. There is not a unidirectional flow of information, rather learning takes place through an exchange of real-life experiences and self-expression is encouraged. In the first half of the twenty-five weeks the topics for the group discussions focus on children's development, health, nutrition and creative play activities. In the second half, the emphasis is on discipline, mother-child interaction, communication, expressing feelings and the needs of the mother.

A further component has been added in the past year. During the group meetings and following the weekly Mother Enrichment topics, the group leaders direct the discussion to a specific topic in family planning and health. The topics range from birth control methods to problems that can be encountered in pregnancy and childbirth.

Following the group discussions, mothers are taught how to use that week's Cognitive Training Programme. Thus in the second part of the group meeting, the group breaks up into smaller groups of four or five, headed by a mother's aide (who is a part of the group but has completed the worksheet with her child the previous week). Each small group role-plays through the worksheets and storybooks in order to be able to use the Cognitive Training Programme effectively with their children at home during the week. Each week's materials contain various exercises to be used by the mother with the child each day. The group leader (Ministry of Education Adult Education teacher) conducts home visits now and then to ensure the Cognitive Training Programme is being implemented correctly and to assist with problems that may be encountered with the child.

In addition to adjusting the actual organization and content of the Mother-Child Education Programme, it was necessary, in order for the project to become a larger programme, to disseminate and publicize results of the Mother Enrichment component of the project. Accordingly, in collaboration with the mothers participating in the mother training programme, an eleven-session television series was prepared. The participating mothers volunteered to take part in the small group discussions which were televised on the state television channel. These television programmes were well-received.

In order to extend the programme, additional funding and a continuing institutional base were required. Based on the research results and television series, it was possible to obtain limited funding from various groups, including parent-teacher associations, women's groups and private businesses. With these funds additional applications of the mother training programme were carried out as a public service, mainly in Istanbul.

In 1991, additional advances were made with the collaboration of UNICEF and the Ministry of Education. A major breakthrough occurred when the Mother Enrichment component of the project was adopted into the Adult Education Programme of the Ministry of Education, targeted at training childminders. The project team trained Adult Education teachers and the revised training manual was published by UNICEF.

Also in 1991, a foundation belonging to a private bank, the Finance Foundation, began providing financial support for the programme in Istanbul in Adult Education Centres attached to the Nonformal Education Division of the Ministry of Education. In two years, over 700 mothers in Istanbul participated in the programme. During 1992 and 1993, with the collaboration of UNICEF and the Finance Foundation, the programme was applied in Sanliurfa in the less-developed South Eastern region of Turkey to over 700 women and young girls. Another replication of the project was begun in 1992, when group leaders were trained in the Netherlands to work with Turkish workers there. The Mother Enrichment component of

the project is currently being applied on a pilot basis in two early enrichment programmes carried out by Averroes Foundation.

These successes and adaptations have helped to promote formation of a privately funded nonprofit organization called the Mother-Child Education Foundation (MCEF), founded in August 1993 with the initiative and support of the Finance Foundation. The aim of the MCEF is to "contribute by means of educational, social economic and financial activities to the development of modern Turkey." The Foundation not only finances the programme but also trains teachers, prepares materials and collaborates with the Ministry of Education and other organizations for the expansion of the programme across Turkey.

Continuing collaboration between the Nonformal Education Division of the Ministry of Education and the MCEF has allowed the programme to expand. The Nonformal Education Division is responsible for Adult Education centres in each district in the country. Adult Education teachers are trained by the MCEF to apply the Mother-Child Education Programme in their own districts, mainly in low-

income shanty town and working class areas. The aim is for the Nonformal Division Ministry staff to be responsible for the implementation of the programme at various levels of the organizational structure. This will allow the number of beneficiaries to increase as the training of staff currently being undertaken by the Foundation can be assumed by Ministry staff. This will also quicken the process of training, reduce costs and set in place a decentralized system.

In the past three years this collaboration has led to participation of over 3,000 mother-child pairs and in 1993-1994, the programme was applied in ten provinces across Turkey. In 1994-1995, expansion to 20 provinces and 4,000 mother-child pairs was planned with the Ministry of Education. In addition, a collaboration with the General Directory of Social Services and the Child Protection Agency (SSCPA) attached to the Office of the Prime Minister has led to pilot projects in Izmir and Ankara. The intention is to implement the programme in twelve districts in 1994-1995.<sup>1</sup>

The process that has been described above, still in progress, is an example of a research project leading to



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a national programme. It is also an example of scientific research affecting public policy. With the help of the Mother-Child Education Programme, the rather narrow definition of preschool education in Turkey in terms of formal centre-based preschools has expanded to include nonformal community and home-based early enrichment. In terms of the goals and targets of nonformal education, also, there has been an expansion in scope to combine early childhood education and care with parent (adult) education and to combine child development goals with women's empowerment, health and family planning. Finally, we also have here an example of effective cooperation among a university, a Ministry (government) and international (UNICEF) and local agencies (Mother-Child Education Foundation). It is clear that programmes have much to gain and are more likely to go to scale with such cooperation. The Mother-Child Education Programme promises to contribute to human development and well-being in Turkey.

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<sup>1</sup> The original four-year project was funded by the International Development Research Centre of Canada; the follow-up study was funded by the Population Council (ME Awards Program).

<sup>2</sup> The vocabulary test was the standardized WISC-R, based on Turkish word counts; mean score for trained group 45.62 and nontrained group 41.92.

<sup>3</sup> The expansion of the Mother-Child Education Programme is financed by the World Bank through the Ministry of Education in a three-year funding plan.

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# The Convention on the Rights of the Child: Moving Promises to Action

ROBERT C. MYERS

## The Convention and Mechanisms for Compliance with its Provisions

The approval of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by the UN Assembly (November 1989) and the subsequent Summit for Children (September 1990) have, without doubt, had an important effect on the way in which the approximately 170 governments that are signatories to the Convention include attention to children within their social planning and programming. This is so in part because national approval of the Convention creates a moral commitment by a country, within an international framework, to seek improvements in the survival, development, protection, and social participation of children. It would be naive, however, to think that moral commitment related to an international document will, alone, serve as a strong incentive for action; governments are too often associated with paper promises and empty rhetoric. With this in mind, one of the most immediate and important features of the Convention and the Summit has been the development of a set of related mechanisms that help to move promises to action, trying to assure that the provisions of the Convention are acted upon.

### A Committee on the Rights of the Child

One mechanism created within the Convention to reinforce promises made by signatories is the Committee on the Rights of the Child (Article 43). As part of their commitment upon signing the document, countries agree to report to this United Nations Committee on their activities related to the Convention within two years after signing the Convention and again every five years thereafter (Article 44). The Committee has established a format and a process for national reporting. According to the Convention, reports 'shall indicate factors and difficulties, if any, affecting the degree of fulfillment of the obligations under the present Convention'. The resulting national reports, which are supposed to be in the public domain in each country (Article 44, Section 6), are presented to the Committee which then com-

ments on the reports, raising questions and making suggestions for further improvements. Every two years, the Committee reports to the UN General Assembly. This process, which has now been functioning for several years, has in some cases stimulated additional action and/or led to useful public debate in the respective countries about the rights and welfare of children.

### NGO Activities

Another development fostered by the Convention has been the appearance of activities, explicitly intended to further adherence to the provisions of the Convention, that are being carried out by new national, regional and international groupings of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Some of these activities are educational, promotional, or service actions by NGOs intended to reinforce particular rights and to improve directly living conditions affecting the welfare of children. Other activities are focussed on sharing information and on monitoring the process of complying with the Convention. These new mechanisms include the growth of international networks such as the Children's Rights Information Network<sup>1</sup>, regional networks such as the Latin American Regional Collective to Help Follow up the Convention<sup>2</sup>, and national groups (such as the 13 national groups of NGOs participating in the Latin American regional collective or the Philippine national grouping). In some cases, these NGO groups also provide information to the International Committee on the Rights of the Child. The Committee uses this information when interpreting governmental reports and in formulating suggestions to governments. Some of the national NGO groups produce parallel reports (to those of the government) on the status of children in their countries and others cooperate with the government in producing a joint report<sup>3</sup>.

### The World Summit for Children and National Programmes of Action

Yet another mechanism for moving promises into action (and the one closest to the central theme of this Notebook) has been a process, promoted and moni-

tored closely by UNICEF, of developing National Plans or Programmes of Action (NPAs). NPAs are linked to a worldwide Plan of Action adopted at the conclusion of the World Summit for Children, obligating the 71 heads of State and Government and 88 Senior officials who attended to create national plans for the decade of the 1990s. The World Summit Plan of Action sets out 25 specific goals, based on provisions of the Convention. Most of the participating nations in the Summit and the signatories to the Convention have now formulated NPAs for children looking ahead to the year 2000. And, in some cases, the NPAs are being decentralized and Local Programmes of Action (LPA) are being formulated.<sup>4</sup>

Against this background, the purpose of this brief note is not to report in a detailed and systematic way on NPAs and their relation to the World Plan or the Convention on Children's Rights. Rather, my reading of the Convention and perusal of a number of NPAs lead me to share some thoughts on the place of early childhood care and development (ECCD) in the Convention, in the NPAs and in the extensive process of planning and monitoring the rights of children. I will raise several questions to be kept in mind by those involved in the process of promoting, planning, and monitoring Convention promises, and I will end with a challenge to the ECCD community.

## **Early Childhood Development in the Convention, in NPAs and in Monitoring the Convention**

Article 6 of the Convention says that "States Parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child". It is my considered impression that the child development part of this statement is being neglected, particularly with respect to development during the early childhood years. Moreover, my impression is that little is being done within the framework of the Convention to monitor or meet Article 18 (Section 2) stating that "...States Parties shall render appropriate assistance to parents and legal guardians in the performance of their child-rearing responsibilities and shall ensure the development of institutions, facilities and services for the care of children". Similarly, Article 27 (Section 1) seems neglected: "States Parties recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development." This impression is based in part on looking at several NPAs where ECCD, if not absent,



UNICEF/Sean Sprague

is given very little attention. Ironically, this is occurring at the same time that ECCD seems to be gaining ground from other points of view, not related to child rights or to the Convention.

There are several reasons why I think ECCD has a minor place in the discussions of children's rights and in the monitoring of the Convention.

**■ Rights related to healthy child development do not seem to be set out with clarity in the Convention**

Developmental rights are much less clear and concrete, for instance, than rights to survival or rights related to protection. As an example, in Article 27, where an appropriately integral view of development is established in Section 1, development is then linked in Section 2 directly to providing "conditions of living necessary for the child's development", and in Section 3 this is reduced more explicitly to providing "material assistance and support programmes, particularly with regard to nutrition, clothing and housing". The ECCD community, I believe, would insist that development requires much more than nutrition, clothing and housing. No mention is made in this article of the Convention of psychosocial or educational conditions that should be provided to promote healthy development. Rather, these pieces of what might be considered a key dimension in the developmental rights of children are scattered throughout the document and are often handled in a negative way or a way that does not make clear the connection to healthy development.

In general, the Convention assigns primary responsibility for the "upbringing and development of the child" to parents or legal guardians who are to act in "the best interests of the child". (Article 18, Section 1) However, as indicated above, governments are also assigned responsibilities for assisting parents and legal guardians in the performance of their childrearing responsibilities (Article 18, Section 2) and also for taking "all appropriate measures to ensure that children of working parents have the right to benefit from child-care services and facilities for which they are eligible". (Article 18, Section 3)

Notwithstanding these provisions, as one looks at NPAs, attention by governments to child care institutions, facilities and services is frequently missing. Governments often seem to be content to leave the responsibility for child care with parents.

Ironically, attention to preschool education does seem to be present in many NPAs. This is ironic because the Convention does not include preschooling or early learning in its treatment of a child's right to education. Although Article 29 states that the education of the child should be directed to "the development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential", Article 28 which provides the context for this statement treats

education strictly in terms of schooling. Accordingly, the educational rights of children are specified in terms of primary, secondary higher and vocational education (schooling). Thus, the development referred to in Article 29 is that which occurs in school, and primary school is defined as the starting point. Learning and education associated with development during the earliest years (whether at home or in preschool settings) are left out of the educational rights of children. Instead, we are left to assume that this early learning is covered in other parts of the Convention, in relation to, for instance, childcare and childrearing (Article 18), various measures of protection (e.g. freedom from abuse, Article 19), or in relation to children in special circumstances, including children with mental or physical disabilities (Article 23). One reason this lack of clarity with respect to the right to education is disturbing is that most monitoring of the ECCD component of the Convention is being carried out in relation to the education sector, based on the interpretation given to the Convention at the Summit for Children.

**■ A low priority was assigned to ECCD at the Summit for Children**

Another reason why ECCD may not be receiving its due as part of the follow-up of the Convention is that a relatively low priority was assigned to ECCD as the provisions of the Convention were interpreted and translated into goals at the Summit for Children and in the resulting Plan of Action. The emphases given to particular areas in the World Plan of Action are reflected in National Plans and in monitoring. More specifically, the World Plan, set out at the Summit in September 1990, listed 25 objectives to be pursued, each related to an area of sectorial actions favoring the child. The grouping of these objectives by sector was as follows:

Health and Education of Women .....	4 objectives
Nutrition .....	8 objectives
Child health .....	6 objectives
Water and Sanitation .....	3 objectives
Basic Education .....	4 objectives
Children in Difficult Circumstances .....	1 objective

It is clear that actions related to all of these objectives have a bearing on the development of young children, but particularly on their physical development as problems are overcome related to protein-energy malnutrition, lack of micronutrients, diseases, etc. What is again weak, however, is recognition of the mental, social, moral and spiritual dimensions of development referred to in the Convention. The one (very general) goal of the 25 listed that deals directly with child development is the first goal listed under education which states: "Increase early childhood development activities, including appropriate low-cost interventions based in the family and in the

community."<sup>3</sup> This goal goes beyond the Convention's treatment of *basic education* and does provide a basis for attention to early childhood development. The reader will note, however, that the goal is extremely general (as contrasted, for instance, with other goals such as "elimination of illness caused by guinea worm by the year 2000", or "reduction of 50% in deaths caused by diarrhea in children under age 5"). The reader will also note the reference to low-cost interventions, a stipulation that is not deemed necessary when setting out other goals or proposed actions.

A further interpretation of the Convention and consolidation of priorities was made at the Summit by defining in the worldwide Plan of Action seven "Principle Goals of Survival, Development and Protection". The seven refer specifically to: 1) infant and child mortality; 2) maternal mortality; 3) malnutrition; 4) water and sanitation; 5) universal access to basic education; 6) illiteracy; and 7) protection of children in especially difficult circumstances. In this delimitation, basic education is made synonymous with primary schooling, thereby setting aside early childhood development from the *principle* goals. Here we see even more clearly how the Summit interpreted and gave priority to certain parts of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. This is important to note because National Programmes of Action have been formulated, in the main, with respect to the goals set out by the Summit rather than with respect to the broader conditions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. As a result, many provisions of the Convention are not considered in National Plans, including such basic rights as the simple right of a child to a name (something that is not part of the legal fabric of many societies), the right not to be abused or civic rights and the right to participation. And, in the process of following the seven general goals of the Summit, child development and care during the early years are virtually missing from some NPAs and the related monitoring process.

#### ■ Emphasis on what can be measured

A third reason why I think ECCD is weak in the follow-up activities related to the Convention and in many NPAs is that an emphasis has been placed on quantitative indicators, in planning and monitoring the Convention, for which there are agreed-upon measures that can be compared internationally. Whereas there is general agreement on certain indicators such as infant mortality, weight for age, or low birthweight, similar agreement does not now exist on how to measure the mental, social and emotional

development of young children. And, given the cultural and social differences in the way in which child development is defined, it is difficult to insist on an internationally comparable measure for child development. There is a tendency to think that if something cannot be measured easily and compared internationally, it is not important, or even worse, that it does not exist.

As one looks at NPAs and at reports of progress, the measurable indicator that seems to be used for early childhood care and development is a measure of the coverage of preschool programmes. If preschool coverage increases, the assumption is that there is progress toward improving child development. However, this institutional view, concentrating on coverage, does not tell us what is actually happening with respect to various dimensions of children's development. Also, even this apparently-simple indicator is often distorted because only formal programmes of preschooling are included in the coverage figure, leaving out nonformal programmes and leaving out such initiatives as parental education. Similarly, because



Aga Khan Foundation/Jean-Luc Ray

**The worldwide Plan of Action neglects attention to the mental, social and emotional development of young children.**

this monitoring occurs in relation to educational programmes, child care institutions and services may be left out. Finally, the indicator is not comparable internationally because of the wide variation in the type and quality of the preschool programmes being offered in different settings.

In brief, the quantitative measures being applied to monitor early childhood care and development within the framework of the Convention are, at best, very limited.



UNICEF/93-1828/Andy Andrew

**How has early childhood care and development been treated in your NPA?**

## Some Questions for Readers to Ask

What I have presented above are thoughts and impressions that must be treated as hypotheses rather than facts when looking at a particular situation or National Programme of Action. As readers seek to verify these hypotheses and as you go about examining relationships among the Convention, the Summit, National NPAs and specific actions in your respective countries, the following questions might be kept in mind.

- How have the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child been translated into the National Plan or Programme of Action in your country? Has the attachment of NPAs to the outcome of the Summit led to reinterpreting the Convention, or to leaving out attention to some important rights? If so, what provisions of the Convention have been set aside in the process?
- Has your country written reports to be presented to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child? If not, why not? If so:
  - To what extent do the reports reflect a critical view of the situation of children and of progress toward fulfillment of the obligations under the Convention and to what extent do the reports

simply present positive outcomes and plans?

- Who has participated in the process of writing the reports and how has that affected them?
- Is the information provided reliable?
- Are national reports in the public domain? Have they been debated?
- How has early childhood care and development been treated in your NPA, in monitoring and in reports? Are specific ECCD goals and objectives included? What are the indicators proposed for monitoring progress toward the goals? Are these adequate? Does monitoring concentrate on formal preschool education or are nonformal programmes and child care programmes also included?
- Does the inability to quantify early childhood progress distort planning and prejudice important areas?

## A Challenge

Despite ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by most of the countries in the world, and despite the fact that *human development* and *quality of life* have been placed, in recent years, much more at the center of the international development debate, child development has not yet become a natural and important part of that debate or of monitoring the



developmental progress of nations. (See review of *Towards a Children's Agenda* on page 71.) As suggested above, this failure is related at least in part to the failure to agree upon appropriate measures of what constitutes early childhood care and development.

This presents the ECCD community with a major challenge: to agree upon measures of early childhood development that can be used for monitoring the developmental progress of children at a national level. This means moving beyond measures of programme coverage. In facing this challenge, it will be important to accept and preserve differences in cultural definitions of early childhood development. This means that the indicators used will not be comparable internationally (or even, necessarily, applicable at national levels in such heterogeneous places as India). But such agreed-upon indicators can be useful for planning, programming, monitoring and evaluation at either national or local levels which, after all, are where initiatives are taking place and where effects are expected.

In facing this challenge it will also be important to respect the integrated nature of development. It would be unfortunate, for instance, to define development exclusively in terms of physical development or of mental development, leaving aside social and emotional development. This suggests the need for developmental profiles of children and the need for periodic measurement of the several dimensions to see how they are moving over time.

Creating a profile of child development or of the status of children may be more a political than a technical question, requiring ways to get different parts of government and society to bring together in one place the various measures presently being applied to create the profile. It may also involve an even more difficult task of overcoming feuds within academic communities where various schools of thought defend at all cost their particular measures of child development. These potential obstacles notwithstanding, the goal is within our reach, as is being shown, for instance, in Jamaica where a process of monitoring the status of children has been agreed upon and is being tried out.<sup>6</sup> Efforts are also being made to develop appropriate indicators through a Childwatch project described on page 61.

Let us accept the challenge of defining early childhood indicators that can be used to monitor children's development as our contribution to making the Convention of the Rights of the Child a living document. Let us promote solid planning and monitoring at national and local levels of child development programmes in the best interests of the child and of our respective societies.

The full text of the Convention on the Rights of the Child can be found on the Internet at the UNICEF gopher.

For a print version, contact:

Mr. John Bennett

The Young Child and Family Project, UNESCO

7, Place Fontenoy

75700 Paris, France

Tel: (33-1) 45-68-08-15, Fax: (33-1) 44-49-99-18

To review your nation's NPA, contact:

Childwatch International

P.O. Box 1096

Blindern

N-0317 Norway

Tel: (47-22) 85-42-88 or 85-48-41, Fax: (47-22) 85-52-53

childwatch@uio.no

<sup>1</sup>The facilitating organizations for this international information network are: The Children's Defense Fund International, Save the Children (UK), Radda Barnen (Sweden), The International Alliance of Save the Children (Switzerland), The NGO Group on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Switzerland), and the International Center for Child Development (UNICEF/Italy). The coordination of this group can be contacted care of: Becky Purbrick, Overseas Information and Research, Save the Children (UK), 17 Grove Lane, London SE5 8HD, the United Kingdom.

<sup>2</sup>The Latin American network has brought together national non-governmental committees that have been formed in 13 Latin American countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay). Also participating in the network are regional offices of Radda Barnen, UNICEF, Catholic Children, Children's Defense International, Save the Children (US and Canada), Redd Barna, and the Organization of American States. Information about this initiative can be obtained from: Radda Barnen, Oficina Regional para America del Sur, Calle Uno 932, Urbanizacion Corpac, Lima 27, Peru.

<sup>3</sup>An example of the first is the *Third Report on the Rights of the Child and the Situation of Children in Mexico, 1994*, which has been published recently (in Spanish) by the Colectivo Mexicano de Apoyo a la Ninez (COMEXANI). In Chile, the National Group to Assist the Convention on the Rights of the Child (GAN) has critiqued the government's plan of action but has also worked to produce a joint report for presentation to the Committee.

<sup>4</sup>See, C. Castillo and R. Dunbar, 1995. *The Children Here: Current Trends in the Decentralization of National Plans of Action*. Also, W. G. Nuqui, 1994 *The Philippines: A Case Study in Local Planning for Children*. These publications can be obtained from: UNICEF International Child Development Centre, Piazza Santissima Annunziata 12, 50122, Florence, Italy, Fax: (39-55) 24-48-17.

<sup>5</sup>This goal was taken directly from the Framework for Action approved at the World Conference on Education for All in Thailand in March 1990.

<sup>6</sup>For information about this initiative, readers may write to Robert Myers at the Consultative Group, or contact directly: Janet Brown, The Caribbean Child Development Centre, University of the West Indies, P.O. Box 141, Mona, Kingston 7, Jamaica.

In this section, we introduce programmes designed to provide quality services to young children and their families. In many cases, the programmes we profile are already working as a resource in their country or region. Many have developed innovative materials, practices, or training methods, which they are now introducing to others. Some of the programmes have been rigorously evaluated by "scientific" measures and others rely on anecdotal evidence to describe their impacts. The descriptions below are taken primarily from materials sent to us by the programmes being described and do not constitute endorsement of particular models. Our goal in presenting them to you is to reflect the diversity of efforts being undertaken to address the needs of young children and their families, and to encourage networking among those involved in ECCD provision.

We invite you to send us information about effective programmes in your region.



UNICEF/88-0012/Ellen Tolmie

## Chile

### TILNA (Workshops for Local Integration, at a National Level)

Submitted by Salamon Magendzo

This note describes briefly a national project in Chile that is trying, in an integrated way, to strengthen the ability of local organizations and community members to improve early childhood care and development, taking into account differences in culture and conditions. The approach is being tried out in many localities throughout the country, qualifying it as a "national" programme, even though its focus is on local integration.

The Project functions through what are called "Workshops for Local Integration", and is known by its Latin acronym, TILNA. Each TILNA Workshop seeks to bring together early education teachers, helpers, mothers, young people, community leaders, communicators and other professionals who work with and for children

under the age of six in a given local community. In an interactive and cooperative way, the Workshops try to unite specialized institutions and community organizations concerned with early childhood care and development (ECCD) at the local level. The expectation is that the Workshops can become self-standing joint ventures, serving as integrated mechanisms with local presence and with a holistic approach. The goal is to allow community members and community-level institutions to develop a shared sense of responsibility for the early education of their young children.

It is well known that the early childhood topic engages a large number of committed people who hold different viewpoints and function from different institutional bases. An assumption of the TILNA project is that fostering interaction among the people who live in a specific community, (with its specific geographic, historical, social and cultural conditions), can lead to joint actions reinforcing everyday practices, behaviours, cultural and artistic expressions that will improve the wel-

fare of young children. The process begins by inviting committed people to share their particular experiences. They are then encouraged to move beyond their particular institutional boundaries by looking together into their local community, using a participatory action-research methodology. The focus is to find out how existing resources in the community can best be drawn upon to favor early childhood development and to set up early childhood projects.

The TILNA approach is a "positive" and constructive approach. Its aim is not to compensate for community shortcomings or scarcities, but is, rather, to identify and reinforce actual and potential family and community assets residing in the popular as well as the institutional culture of a community. At the same time, the approach does not ignore disadvantages. On the contrary, it is assumed that a community which develops a positive concept of itself by appraising and developing its potentialities, will also be capable of identifying and coping with its deficiencies, but in an active way that is totally different from that of a typical "compensatory" approach.

**Aims.** Considering the above, the TILNA project has the following aims:

- To favor the creation of an environment for exchange and the collective reinforcement among all people in a community who are directly related to early childhood development.
- To recognize the contributions of every working group in the community by promoting dialogue among distinct cultures, providing a base for real and positive transformations in family, community, and institutional conditions affecting early childhood. (This, of course, requires admitting from the outset that there is cultural diversity in the community and identifying not only what the differences are, but also who the social protagonists are for the different groups and how they relate to each other.)
- To promote participation by parents and community members in projects related to early childhood development, by using a participatory methodology.
- To develop a permanent working group, with autonomy and a strong management capacity, which participates in the process of local decision-making.
- To develop in the community the capacity to identify, support, and dynamize all those community expressions that favor the development of the child.

**Strategies.** To achieve these aims, several strategies are required. First, a motivational strategy is necessary in order to get people to commit to meeting in the workshops. Second, a

participatory method of working with families and communities is required. To foster the work with families, several topics have been emphasized in workshop sessions: popular culture; participatory methodologies and techniques; group interaction; and methods of promoting local development. Third, an action-research strategy is needed to help workshop participants and community members to identify existing strengths. Developing the skills to carry out such action research is an important part of the project. It is precisely through this action research that the TILNA hope to construct a new sense of knowledge and cooperation. Fourth, an organizational strategy is pursued that aims at converting each community workshop into a self-sustaining entity, capable of carrying on as a self-financing project.

**Organization.** The overall programme of the TILNA is coordinated by a non-governmental organization called the Interdisciplinary Programme for Educational Research (PIIE). Funding comes from a programme within the Chilean government that is designed to improve the quality of basic education in the country, including education and early development during the preschool years. The staff of PIIE are charged with guiding the work of local coordinators (facilitators) in each community. These local facilitators are responsible for the generation of a learning process within the workshops, making use of a democratic and participatory methodology. It is hoped that within the three-year initial life of the project, independent local groups will be formed and functioning in a way that will allow them to continue beyond the immediate life of the project.

For more information about the TILNA experience contact: Salamon Magendzo, Programa Interdisciplinario de Investigaciones en Educacion, Brown Sur 150, Nuñoa, Santiago, Chile. Fax: (56-2) 204-7460



UNICEF/Carolyn Watson

## Ghana

*Submitted by Seema Argawal*

The Accra Declaration which came out of Ghana's National Seminar on Early Childhood Development, October 1993, made children a priority for attention. It calls upon all relevant government departments and agencies, NGOs, individuals and partners in ECCD to collectively broaden Ghana's scope and vision for young children. What follows is a description of a project undertaken by UNICEF in collaboration with government, NGOs and communities as a result of the Accra Declaration.

In 1994 an ethnographic survey was undertaken in the Afram Plains district of Ghana to identify the current learning context of the rural Ghanaian child and to identify the changes that could be made in order to enhance this context. The study investigated both the formal and informal contexts within which children live and learn. The aim was to develop processes that would empower pupils, teachers, community members and district leaders to collaborate in the identification of problems and in finding solutions to a central policy concern of the government: Why do children appear not to be learning much in school?

Key people from the district/circuit and local/village communities were involved in the process of assessment, analysis, reflection and planning. They began by seeking information on each of the child's learning environments—the

home, the school, the community, the farm. Interviews and observations were carried out in as many of these locations as possible. The survey was undertaken in a limited number of school communities. 75 interviews were conducted with adults (parents, teachers, head teachers, community elders, and members of the village/town development committees) and 50 children were observed and interviewed.

The survey and analysis focused primarily on the health and well-being of the child. Questions were asked about daily diet, pattern and type of eating, use and quality of water sources, cleanliness, toilet and hygiene practices, and awareness of causes of sickness. An attempt was also made to describe a day in the life of a child, examining the child's work pattern in terms of daily and weekly cycles, social expectations, and rules governing children's role in the family, with peers and with the community. Mothers were asked about breastfeeding practices and how they combine their work with their childcare responsibilities. And children's learning/cognitive development was assessed in terms of their abilities: to discriminate, sort and order; to establish and use categories; to exhibit visual/motor coordination through replicating patterns (circle, square, shape, first pattern), recognizing figures, manipulating objects, and creating drawings; to play games; to use toys or representations; and to demonstrate their knowledge of the name of village, area, district, region, country.

The research from the Afram Plains confirmed that the health and nutritional status of the young



child is at risk, and pointed to the poor quality of care given to young children by older children, by the elderly and by illiterate mothers who are constrained due to their economic hardships and struggle for daily food security. The study indicated that frequently parents are not involved in the care of their children nor in preparing them for school in the mornings. This leaves the children to fend for themselves and to provide for the family (i.e. preparing food for themselves and others and ensuring that they eat, determining what is consumed daily, collecting and using water, washing and cleaning, and to a large extent, providing their own source of income for food, clothing and schooling).

From the study a powerful picture emerged of the children as childminders. As women play an important role in farming activities, they are routinely absent from the household. Older children, both girls and boys, although more often girls, look after their young brothers and sisters at home, on the farm, or in the marketplace. The performance of this function invariably implies that they can not go to school. Moreover the fact that childcare functions are carried out in an isolated, uneducated environment, determines that the outcome is often poor. The problems which cause difficulty in school, such as lack of good health, sight and hearing defects, lack of concentration, low learning ability, and poor self-esteem, are generally rooted by the age of four.

Based on the results of the survey, several new initiatives were undertaken. The *Childscope* (Child-School-Community) Project is an integrated community-based development project which places the child at the centre and uses the school as the entry point in involving the community in improving the care and learning of young children. Particular emphasis is placed on replacing outmoded teaching methods with methods which promote active learning and critical thinking. Adopting the philosophy of the Child-to-Child approach, the *Childscope* Project is making school-based teaching and learning child-centred, related to the care and nutrition needs and responsibilities of children and the general promotion of health. It is believed that by making learning relevant and fun, the interaction between the child and school becomes an active, enriching experience, rather than passive, tiring and alienating. Linking basic education with intersectoral priorities of better health, nutrition, water and sanitation, hygiene, food production and childcare practices encourages community participation and fosters closer links between the child, the school, and the community. In essence, the project empowers communities and teachers to own their school and to improve the relevance and efficiency of the primary classes in order to attract and keep more children in school, especially girls.

UNICEF, in cooperation with DANIDA and the Danish National Federation of Early Childhood Youth Education (BUPL), have initiated a programme to upgrade the national *Training Institute for Early Childhood Educators*, both physically and professionally, so that it can operate as a resource centre. The aim is to improve the professional competence and skills of a core group of educators placed at the National Centre and at the community level.

*Credit with Education* is another programme which was begun, managed by the international NGO, Freedom from Hunger. The project is designed to enable poor women in rural areas of Ghana to increase their incomes and savings and to motivate them to undertake nutritionally beneficial behaviour to improve their household security, nutrition and health status, and the care practices for their children. Through this programme rural banks offer credit to the women and these women are also provided with an educational programme focussing on basic accounting skills, primary healthcare, nutrition and childcare. The focus on good parenting is a central feature of the programme.

For more information on Early Childhood programmes in Ghana, contact: Seema Argawal c/o Dr. David Harding, UNICEF House, 73 Lodhi Estate, New Delhi 110 003, India. Fax: (91-11) 462-7521. Or: Adwoa Sey, Project Officer, UNICEF, P.O. Box 5051, Accra-North, GHANA. Tel: (233-21) 777972; Fax: (233-21) 773147.

## Bangladesh

### Women's Savings Group

Submitted by Lisa Lanier Krift

In 1972, Save the Children (SC) began working in Nasirnagar, one of the poorest areas in Bangladesh. Eighty-six percent of the population lives in poverty. Women and children are most affected: the maternal mortality rate is 165 deaths per 100,000 live births (one of the highest in the world), and the under-five mortality rate is 150 deaths per 1,000. In addition, over 90% of the children who survive infancy are malnourished.

The aim of Save the Children in Bangladesh is to measurably improve the lives of poor women and their children within the context of the family and community through sustainable integrated programmes. *Women's Savings Groups* (WSGs) are the mechanism through which the poorest women are targeted with mutually-reinforcing sectoral interventions in education, health and





UNICEF/93-1279/Maggie Murray-Lee

economic development. The WSGs also provide a structured forum for discussion and decision-making on issues affecting the family and community.

The WSGs provide a mechanism through which SC can focus on women's empowerment and child development. In partnership with a large-scale, national NGO, Save the Children is implementing a women's development and credit programme which currently covers 201 Women's Savings Groups. The local partner implements the savings and credit component of the programme and Save the Children provides assistance in group formation and training in various aspects of social development.

Save the Children's Women-Child Impact programme has produced a Women's Savings Group training curriculum which integrates economic development, child development, maternal/child health and group management components. The curriculum is action-oriented and enables the women to gain skills related to savings and credit, group management, health and family planning, nonformal primary education and gender issues. Training and credit activities support health interventions that include child survival maternal and reproductive health, including STD/HIV prevention.

Through an Early Childhood Care and Development project, a Child-to-Child programme, and an Adolescent Family Life Education programme, Save the Children addresses the educational needs of children from infancy through adolescence, with an emphasis

on practical life skills. The Early Childhood Care and Development project trains parents to carry out low-cost, home-based activities that address developmental needs of preschool children and encourage longer-term educational attainment. Caregiving messages are conveyed within the integrated WSG curriculum and reinforced through playful activities which parents are taught to do with their children. The Child-to-Child programme was designed to develop the childcare skills of older children (ages 8-11) who care for their younger siblings. An Adolescent Family Life Education programme has been initiated to address the needs of young adults, many of whom become young parents before they are emotionally or physically equipped.

Action research is a vital component of Save the Children's programme in Bangladesh. Save the Children places a particular emphasis on assessing the impact of the Women's Savings Groups on the health, fertility, and educational well-being of women and children in order to contribute to the growing body of research on the impact of women's empowerment on development. Both quantitative and qualitative methods of research are used to assess programme impact. Results of research are used to design innovative programmes and influence policy at the national level.

For further information contact: Lisa Lanier Krift, Co-Director SC/US—Bangladesh, G.P.O. Box 421, Dhaka 1000, Bangladesh. Tel: (880-2) 315291; Fax: (880-2) 813019

# Programme Profiles



## The Netherlands

### Profile of MIM: a Community Mothers Programme in Breda

Submitted by Marian H. Hanrahan, Bert Prinsen, Yvonne de Graaf

There is a Community Mothers Programme in the Netherlands called *Mothers Informing Mothers*, we call it MIM for short. It was developed as part of the regular health services for parents and preschool children in The Netherlands. The aims of the programme are to support young parents with parenting: helping them to cope, stay abreast of their child's development, and prevent childrearing problems. All mothers of first children are offered the programme, but special attention is given to reaching socially disadvantaged groups and members of migrant communities. The main focus is on mothers. By trying to reinforce their sense of self-esteem MIM hopes thereby to improve their ability to be self-supporting parents. In doing so they, as the main educators, may increase the opportunities for optimal development and health for their children. This Dutch programme was adapted from the Irish Community Mothers Programme and the Child Development Programme from the United Kingdom.

The MIM programme uses experienced mothers to help provide educational support for new parents in learning effective primary health and educational practices. The experienced mothers

visit the young mother in her home. They live in the same neighborhood and they usually have similar backgrounds. The experienced mother will use her own standards and experiences as a mother to support and assist the young mother. In doing so she tries to give as little advice as possible; rather she aims to support the young mother in finding her own answers to day to day questions and in resolving problems as they arise. The programme starts early, ideally just before confinement, and lasts until the baby is 18 months old. The community mothers are supported by a health visitor specialized in child health and welfare.

#### ■ Programme development

The programme was developed with the aid of mothers in Breda, a middle-sized town situated in one of the southern provinces of the Netherlands, in conjunction with the NICW (the Netherlands Institute of Care and Welfare) with financial support coming from the Bernard van Leer Foundation. Impetus for the programme came from young mothers who wanted help coping as parents and the *kruisvereniging Breda* who wanted to improve their health educational services.

A *kruisvereniging* is a voluntary association serving the community as a community nursing agency offering parent-child care/health services, home nursing and nutritional support. Often the *kruisvereniging* is part of a larger organization which also provides home help and social work services.

The parent-child care/health services provides well-baby and toddler-clinics, and screening for

PKU/CHT. It is instrumental in carrying out the national vaccination programme and provides individual support to parents with special needs. The often specialized community nurses will make housecalls when appropriate. The parent and child health services are funded by state legislation with an additional annual subscription to a *kruisvereniging* (approximately 50 guilders). Nearly all parents with preschool children are members of such an association. The *kruisverenigings* together cover a full national network.

The NICW is the national institute responsible for research and development on behalf of health and welfare services in an extensive field covering the elderly, homecare, young people, refugee facilities and local welfare work. It incorporates the Centre for Professional and Vocational Affairs and the Information Centre on Care and Welfare. The institute is primarily concerned with innovation and improvement in the quality of the work in the field. It promotes a coherent approach to this work. Most of its activities are undertaken in close collaboration with field agencies in the form of projects. Its products are intended for service-providers and include professional manuals, descriptions of models, training programmes, conferences and surveys of the current state of and developments within the care and welfare sectors.

Within the MIM project the institute was instrumental in the development and publication of practical products:

- the 'coordinators handbook' on how to start the MIM programme in a *kruisvereniging*. This book is geared toward health visitors specialized in child health and welfare,
- a book on the theoretical background of the method and essence of the programme,
- the results of an action-research project,
- the programme sequence of cartoons and home visiting checklist.

The Dutch materials were based on the cartoons and other materials of the Irish Community Mothers Programme from the Eastern Health Board in Dublin. Dutch mothers helped to choose the most appropriate themes. After that they were instrumental in the adaptation process of the cartoons. This was needed to take into account the cultural differences between Irish and Dutch mothers. Finally the mothers helped to adapt the accompanying descriptions of the cartoons.

## ■ Programme aims

The programme aims are similar to the Irish Community Mothers Programme, but MIM puts more emphasis on pedagogical support. The programme seeks not only to improve the effectiveness of primary health education directed toward parents from socioeconomically disadvantaged

groups, but is also directed toward refugees and displaced persons. The programme wishes to empower mothers. Simultaneously however, it influences the organization of care as provided by the *kruisvereniging*.

## ■ Programme results so far

At present the programme is being implemented in a limited way by similar associations throughout the country. The programme has been instrumental in Breda in enhancing the quality of ongoing parent support activities. A clear understanding of the range and type of questions from parents to the "experienced" community mothers has also influenced practices at well-baby clinics. For example, the Programme plays a supportive role in delivering health education information. The experienced community mothers make a clear distinction between health educational advice with a link towards screening activities (inoculations, sight, physical development) and pedagogical support (importance of mothers' role in speech and cognitive development, talk and play with the baby).

Parents receiving the service appear as a rule to be increasingly self-reliant and confident. Also the programme increases the outreach effect of a *kruisvereniging*. On a programme level, MIM offers much more time for individual attention and tailor-made support. Despite a difficult economic climate within *kruisverenigingen*, where there is a shift away from preventive health activities due to lack of funds, the tentative results of the MIM project are favorable to warrant further activity in starting a national experiment.

The original programme started in 1991 with a preparatory phase and ended in April 1994 with a programme report and four publications. All documentation is available in Dutch. The action-research results show that mothers of different social backgrounds benefitted from the programme. Because of the encouraging results from this action-research project it is now possible to talk to other interested directors of care about using and extending the programme to their organization.

At present, there are four organizations working or just starting to work (September 1995) with the programme. They are situated in different locations in the Netherlands. Their financing comes from different sources. One association has rearranged budget parameters with permission of the regional health insurer, another receives a subsidy from the local municipal authority. A third is using funding from a charitable foundation. Breda itself has funded the continuation of MIM by exercising costcutting measures. It appears that other organizations could use similar budgetary measures to finance their participation in such a programme.

## ■ Further activities

Some directors of the *kruisverenigingen* are very interested in the effects of the programme. These directors are considering participating in further research on health benefits and costs. We are planning to establish a national consortium consisting of all participating agencies and the original stakeholders to ensure that quality of care is assured and support is guaranteed. We are at present in the middle of a promotional drive and implementing the programme which will last until May 1996 with the aim of finding enough organizations willing to embrace the programme and act as research sites. It is hoped that by May 1996 enough organizations will participate in the next stage of the effort to enable the start of a nationwide research project on the effects of nonprofessional intervention in parenting.

Further research on the effectiveness of the programme and innovations in childcare are a prerequisite for future developments and a decision is needed whether or not to integrate the programme on a statutory basis. Within the research project, the programme will be judged using health and welfare indicators and changes in outcome, such as changes in health status. We have a working relationship with the Dublin project and hope to replicate their findings. In that way we hope to test the effectiveness of the programme so that with the results the decision to fund the programme as an integral part of the national parent-child care/health services could be possible. We hope that as a result of research findings and innovations in childcare the MIM programme might be incorporated in the statuto-

ry services by the year 2000. We are presently looking for research funding.

As part of our information sharing efforts we are currently planning to organize an international workshop with other early childhood development groups in the European region. The workshop will take place in the Netherlands. We would like to participate in the European network of early childhood development with the aim of working toward the development of a Collaborating Centre. We hope in this way to contribute to the accessibility of information on the effectiveness of health promotion and health education in this field.

For more information on the programme contact: Marian Hanrahan, National Coordinator of MIM Programme, Postbus 19152, 3501 DD Utrecht. Tel: (31-30) 306393; Fax: (31-30) 319641. e-mail M.Hanrahan@nizw.nl

<sup>1</sup> The word *mothers* is used to mean the person who nurtures or cares for a child. This may mean that the actual daily caring for the baby could be done by females and males.

# Network Notes

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# Network Notes



## Letters to the Editor

*The next issue of the Coordinators' Notebook will address the topic of quality in early childhood programming. We invite submissions and communication about this topic and your related experiences*

### Caracas, 13th of July, 1995

I have just received the last *Coordinators' Notebook*, Issue # 16. I am very grateful for that...Your publication has proved to be extremely interesting to our group, due to the fact that we concentrate our work with families and children who live under poverty.

During the last three years we have been working with non-schooling children from 8-15 years of age, their families and communities using the same model we developed for the preschool children belonging to the poorest sectors of Caracas. The model is a non-conventional, integral approach where the 'promotores' are the key people to deliver the programme. It has been a complete success, and has been recognized as an innovation in the realm of nonformal education by the Biennale de L'Education et la Formation, at La Sorbonne, Paris. April 1994, where a paper about it was delivered.

We are almost finishing a longitudinal project about Interaction between mothers and babies belonging to the *barrios*. The final product is a Technical Report, and a 'package' containing a manual for *promotores*, a manual for the mothers, a video with successful interaction situations from the same mothers at 1, 3, 6, and 12 months of age of the babies; an audio cassette with key themes on health and development (based on the experience of the most needed information). We hope to have everything ready by November '95.

Based on the interaction project we are about to start a new project working with mothers and babies in prison, in the unique mother-baby prison in this country. It is a very innovative programme which has the support of the British Council and the British Embassy, plus the Ministry of Justice.

Hoping to keep in touch with you

M. Angelica Sepulveda Leighton  
Director, CENDIF-UNIMET  
Universidad Metropolitana  
Apartado Postal 76819 El Marques  
Caracas 1070 A, Venezuela



# **Bangladesh, 15th of June, 1995**

Thank you very much for your letter which I received several weeks ago. I am very pleased to be kept up to date with the Consultative Group.

Last year, while still Associate Professor of Paediatrics I was involved in starting four breastfeeding corners (help centres) in 4 government hospitals in Dhaka, including the Post Graduate Institute of Medicine and Research. Part of the activities of these centres is to motivate mothers to breastfeed. During these sessions we encourage fathers to be present as well. We have observed that mothers do better with breastfeeding if fathers are involved in these antenatal sessions or at postnatal counselling sessions. Our research is also showing that even mothers with these counselling sessions with caesarian sections are doing better than mothers delivering normally.

Yours sincerely,  
Dr. Shameem Ahmed  
Health Scientist  
MCH-FP Extension Project (Rural)  
International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research (ICDDRDB)  
GPO 128 Dhaka-1000 Bangladesh

# **India, the 22nd of June, 1995**

Thank you very much for sending us two recent issues of the *Coordinators' Notebook*. I find the articles very helpful, especially the summaries of research projects as I am in the process of putting together my ideas on a research proposal based on the series of video films and workbooks recently completed by us.

The series we have made is on Child Development (birth to 5 years) and is intended primarily for caregivers and teachers of children in group settings, in disadvantaged locations. Generally, these adults have not had the benefit of systematic training.

We shall greatly appreciate being included in your mailing list for the CG and will share our activities with you.

Yours sincerely,  
Ranjan Amin, Director  
PRAKRITI Women's Centre  
College of Home Science  
Nirmala Niketan  
49, New Marine Lines  
Bombay, 400 020

# **Lao PDR, the 12th of March, 1995**

Thank you very much for sending me the *Coordinators' Notebook*. I really appreciated seeing the Executive Summary from our study printed in the related research section...Following the recommendations of that study of traditional childrearing practices, I am now assisting the local team to start the Early Childhood and Family Development Project. The project is a pilot project for two years and focusses on Caregiver Education. We are taking the trip in two days to Hoauphan province to plan the project with villagers and local officials. The project will involve developing locally appropriate curriculum and materials on training child caregivers at villages of different ethnic groups. It will also involve building and training the technical teams at the



## Letters to the Editor

local and central levels. If you have any new documents or materials related to Caregiver Education at the village level we would be interested in knowing about or receiving them.

For more information on the study or project you can also contact Ms. Ng Shui Meng, the Education and WID Project Officer at UNICEF Lao PDR.

Thank you for your useful work in Early Childhood Care and Development. Please do keep in touch.

Warm regards  
Somporn Phanjaruniti  
UNICEF  
P.O. Box 1080  
Vientiane, Lao PDR

## Regional Networks

### Latin America

Within the Latin American region a large number of networks pertaining to the young child have been developed over the past few years. These can be classified roughly as follows:



UNICEF/1559/Wittin

■ General child development communication networks:

*Red para la Infancia y la Familia de America Latina y el Caribe*

■ Thematic Networks:

*The Child Rights Network* (see article on p. 33 dealing with the Convention)

*Liga de Leche*

■ Sectoral or disciplinary networks (linked to health, psychology or education)

*The International Society for the Study of Behavioral Development (ISSBD)*

*The Centro Latinoamericano de Perinatología (CLAP)*

*The Latin American Network of Educational Information and Documentation (REDUC)*

An analysis of these networks is provided in the publication, *Hacia el Fortalecimiento de Acciones e Interacciones en Favor de la Niñez Informe del Primer Encuentro sobre Redes de Niñez de America Latina y el Caribe*. (May 1994) which is available from:

CINDE

Cra 33, No. 91-50

Santate de Bogota, COLOMBIA

Tel (571) 256-4116 Fax (571) 218-7598

Yearly symposia involving many of these actors have been organized by the Organization of American States, with the collaboration of UNICEF, UNESCO, the Pan American Health Organization and others. The November 1994 symposium was held in Lima, Peru and the 1995 Symposium titled 'Programa de Desarrollo Integral para la Infancia en Contextos de Pobreza' took place September 25 to 29 in San Jose, Costa Rica. For information about these meetings and for publications resulting from them contact:

Gaby Fujimoto, Organization of American States

Department of Educational Affairs

17th and Constitution Ave. N.W.

Washington D.C. 20006

Fax: (202) 458-3149

## Africa

The Early Childhood Development Network for Africa (ECDNA) is moving ahead. As a result of a meeting in South Africa in February the proposal draft of December 1994 was reviewed and changes made. The new proposal was then shared with donor agencies and the wider ECD community within Africa. The proposal was further refined at a meeting in Uganda, August 18-22, 1995. The Uganda meeting resulted in a revised proposal that focuses on the identification, selection and description of 3-5 case studies of innovative ECCD programmes (family-based, community-based and centre-based). Results will be translated into policy papers, videos, pamphlets, etc. for distribution to specific target audiences.

The ECDNA proposal was shared at the Development for African Education (DAE) Meeting held October 18-21 in Tours, France. Included in the proposal is a recommendation that the ECDNA be recognized as a Working Group within the DAE. (Note: when this issue of the CN went to Press the DAE meeting had not yet been held.) For more information about ECDNA contact:

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NACECE/DICECE  
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Fax (41-22) 736-0948



UNICEF/94-1054/Betty Press

## Middle East

Over the past few years the Arab Resource Collective has organized a number of workshops/seminars designed to provide a networking function in the region. *Dialogue 95* was another seminar that is part of the process. It was held July 10-15 in Cyprus. The meeting brought together practitioners and policymakers from different sectors who have specific responsibility for ECCD and complementary programmes. In addition to the promotion of networking, objectives of the seminar included: to collaborate in producing a conceptual framework consistent with the Convention on the Rights of the Child; to guide programming; to set priorities for work in the region; to organize subsequent training seminars; to promote networking; to establish a newsletter; and to begin the compilation and assessment of existing Arabic resources in ECCD. For more information on *Dialogue 95*, see page 66. For more information on the Arab Resource Collective, contact

Ghanem Bibi  
Arab Resource Collective  
P.O. Box 7380  
Nicosia, CYPRUS  
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Fax: (3572) 452539



UNICEF/John Isaac

# International Organizations

## CG Secretariat

The CG Secretariat, with the collaboration of the CG participating organizations, is putting together a World Wide Web site (Home Page) on Early Childhood Care and Development: international resources in support of young children (0-8) and their families. The site will include information on ECCD, the CG, international and regional networks, programming, policy, research, literature, audio-visual and other resources, and key issues in ECCD. World Wide Web links will be provided to all the major on-line resources relating to ECCD, including the home pages for participating organizations such as UNICEF, World Bank, and IDRC. We are pleased to provide information and texts from programmes, projects, NGOs, and others active in ECCD to the extent we can. We will be establishing a data base of programme profiles, for example, and would welcome materials describing your efforts (please send all information on disk, in either WordPerfect, MS-Word, or another common word processing software, and specify which software you have used). There will also be opportunities to participate in moderated discussions on specific topics, and to order materials on ECCD via e-mail from participating organizations. Through the ECCD Home Page you should also have access to the text of all the major international documents and initiatives referred to in the CN.

The CG Home Page should be up and running by November. For the address, please send an e-mail request to: [cgroup@crocker.com](mailto:cgroup@crocker.com). Please send all papers, materials, program descriptions and book reviews to us, on disk, at: The Consultative Group, 6 The Lope, Haydenville, MA 01039.

## UNICEF

*Young Child Renaissance Envisioned in Florence*<sup>1</sup> UNICEF Early Childhood Development Policy Update (Florence, 31 May-6 June, 1995) by Cyril Dalais.

Thirty representatives from thirteen agencies promoting early child development (ECD) programmes worldwide met at the International Child Development Centre in Florence, Italy from 31 May to 6 June, 1995. The meeting, convened by UNICEF, aimed at reviewing the interagency policy paper on ECD, "Towards a Comprehensive Strategy for the Development of the Young Child", adopted in 1993 by several agencies as a common basis for building partnership for action in ECD, and also aimed at updating this policy paper in line with the UNICEF Basic Education Strategy paper approved by its Executive Board on 26 May, 1995.

What did we ask the participants to do?

- To review strategies set out in the booklet *Early Childhood Development: The Challenge and the Opportunity* (1993), with special reference to girls, children in emergencies, and the disabled child.
- To consider the community as a major source of support to parents and other caregivers in the family, including older siblings, and to seek mechanisms to ensure effective partnerships between families and communities. Key issues discussed were parents as first educators, parenting and adult education.

<sup>1</sup>This summary was taken from an article written by Cyril Dalais for *Education News*, the Newsletter of the UNICEF Education Cluster, July, 1995, Issue N 13. A special report of the workshop will be included in the October issue of *Education News*.

- To analyse the costing and financing of ECD programmes and more efficient ways of monitoring and evaluating them.

Principles for action, strategies for better policy formulation/development, advocacy, capacity building and field support will be established from such reviews and discussions.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was seen as an important tool, and as the right framework for the promotion of the value of the family, the principles of shared parental responsibilities, and the defense of children's rights. The CRC should be used not only as an advocacy tool but also as a basis by which to improve ECD programming and evaluation

How did we proceed?

- Starting with the presentation of a position paper, country illustrations from Africa, Asia, Latin America and North America provided interesting contrasts.
- Information was shared on initiatives led by institutions.

How did we conclude?

The Florence meeting appealed for the inclusion of ECD in a broader framework of human capacity enhancement. Participants concluded with a call for the renaissance of the young child. The following "headlines" were proposed to summarize the workshop conclusions:

- ECD as the *foundation* (not the complement) of basic education.
- The family as the fundamental institution for young child protection, care and development under assault.
- Young child and family policies called for.
- Key problems identified.
- Multisectoral, multilevel linkages to be forged.
- From vision to action.

As a direct follow-up to this seminar UNICEF will:

- Disseminate the conclusions and recommendations of the Policy Update;
- Take the Innocenti Agenda to various regions. (See description of Thailand meeting on page 76)
- Prepare a flier for circulation at the World Women's Conference (Beijing, September, 1995) and the "Sommet de la Francophonie" (Contonou, November, 1995). This flier will also help prepare the way for the next EFA Forum meeting (Amman, May-June, 1996);
- Prepare a Summary Report of the Workshop and circulate it to all participants prior to publication by the Innocenti Centre (October, 1995);
- Revise and edit the papers presented at this meeting for publication in the Innocenti Centre's *Child in Focus* series.

## World Bank

By the end of fiscal 1994, the World Bank will have lent cumulatively over US \$745 million for projects that integrate health, nutrition and early childcare services for young children. These loans have been made through free-standing projects and as part of other social sector projects. Free-standing projects include:

- delivering services directly to children—Colombia's Community Child Care and Nutrition Project, Bolivia's Integrated Child Development Project;
- educating caregivers—Mexico's Initial Education Project,
- creating awareness and increasing demand—Nigeria's Development Communications Project.
- providing an integrated approach—India's first and second Integrated Child Development Projects and the Tamil Nadu Integrated Project

## International Organizations



## International Organizations

Early childhood projects which are part of other social sector efforts include:

- Innovations in Basic Education in Brazil Primary Education Improvement in Chile.
- Social Development in Ecuador;
- Social Rehabilitation in El Salvador,
- Health, Water and Sanitation in Guyana; and
- Social Development in Venezuela.

New bank initiatives are being developed. In Asia this involves policy discussions on integrated early childhood development projects from Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam. In Kazakhstan and Russia social development projects with ECCD components are being created. In Latin America projects are being developed in Paraguay, and in Colombia there are discussions of expanding the community and home-based daycare centre programme. In the Middle East the Government of Turkey has requested support to disseminate a programme on parental education (see article on page 24). And in Africa, regional sector studies are being undertaken in three countries. What follows is a description of the African studies.

### Regional Initiative in Early Childhood Development in Africa: Three Case Studies

**Overview.** The World Bank is accumulating experience in ECCD through investments in Mexico, India, Bolivia, Colombia, Chile, Venezuela, El Salvador and the Philippines. However, apart from a large project on parent education through mass communications in Nigeria, the Bank has not been involved in other parts of Africa. Yet the need is great. In many African countries infant mortality rates and nutritional deficiencies in mothers and children continue to be among the highest in the world. Where child survival is less of an issue, the challenge at hand is to go beyond physical survival and to promote early cognitive and sociomotor development. However, before increasing investment in Africa, three studies are being undertaken to better understand the situation of the African child and family.

Key issues being addressed include defining the appropriate and effective form of child development services, the organization and management of integrated service delivery, defining the role of the State and the appropriate policy environment, and the costs and financing of early childhood development services. Specific issues of interest are being explored through case studies in Kenya, Mauritius and South Africa.

The objectives of the project include:

- *Knowledge generation.* To acquire a better understanding of the emerging needs for child development services in the context of the changing conditions of African mothers and children, and their impact on childrearing practices and the subsequent well-being of children.
- *Capacity building.* To develop the indigenous research base and capacity in the area of maternal and early childhood development by working together with African researchers, educators, NGOs, women's groups and Government ministries.
- *Advocacy.* To influence country and donor policy, financing, programming and its implementation aimed at maternal and early childhood development particularly integrated services of health, nutrition and early education and wider family and community support service.

The Kenya case study has been completed. What follows is a summary of that study and a description of the studies being undertaken in Mauritius and South Africa which are not yet complete.

## Kenya Case Study: Changing Childrearing In Kenya

*Submitted by Elizabeth Swadener for the World Bank*

This national study, carried out from January through May 1995, sought to explore the effects of recent (past 10–15 years) socioeconomic change on childrearing practices, including problems facing families with young children. Additionally, the study examined both traditional and contemporary childcare strategies and encourages all participants to make recommendations for the improvement of the care of children under age three. The study utilized small group interviews with 462 parents, grandparents, siblings, preschool teachers, community leaders, and professionals working with children and families in 8 districts of Kenya, representing 4 types of settings: (1) traditional/pastoralist; (2) rural/ agricultural; (3) plantation/ tea and coffee estates; and (4) urban/high population density. Within these districts, 4–5 locations were sampled to provide further diversity.

The most common theme in regard to socioeconomic changes and associated problems affecting families was the issue of increasing poverty and an array of related problems. First among these, in terms of frequency with which different financial problems were mentioned, was the cost of living (e.g. providing food, clothing, shelter) and second was the rapidly rising costs of educating children in Kenya. Family changes were also noted, including the rapid transition from a communal, extended family model (in which older relatives were available for childcare) to an individual, nuclear family context, in which working parents were left with few options for care, particularly for children under three. This problem was particularly acute in plantation and urban (slum) settings, where parents tended to work long hours and could rarely afford a childminder. Older siblings typically had major responsibility for the care of younger children. In Samburu and Masai communities, grandmothers still provided much of the under-three care.

### Policy and Programmatic Recommendations

- Future initiatives should utilize an inclusive definition of ECCD and not limit provision of resources to formal early childhood programmes;
- Family enhancement and parent support models should be actively explored with parents and communities in order to best meet local needs;
- Ways to relieve parents of the financial burden of the rising cost of living, particularly the costs related to schooling their children, should be actively pursued; such approaches could include creation



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- of "Community Children's Trusts", or a sliding fee scale so that more children can participate in preschool and primary;
- Home-based services to parents, mobile health clinics and training for preschool teachers in primary health should be increased;
  - Intersectoral collaboration at national district and local levels should be increased, with more active sharing of limited resources to benefit young children and their families;
  - Different models of serving children under three should be actively explored and encouraged (e.g. home-based or family childcare, improvement of full daycare centres to better meet the needs of infants and toddlers, and encouragement of parent cooperatives);
  - Feeding programmes and primary health activities should be encouraged, if not required, in all ECCD programmes, with feeding programmes in areas of greatest need (e.g. plantations, slums and settings experiencing drought) providing 25-30% of children's minimum daily nutritional requirements;
  - More flexible working conditions for nursing mothers should be actively sought from employers, with an examination of maternal leave policies undertaken; and
  - Community-based committees should be elected to oversee a programme of expanded ECCD services in Kenya, which should optimize local input and increase the likelihood of building on, versus undermining or competing with, local strengths and community contributions.

In addition, two other priority areas to help ensure the success of any ECCD initiative in Kenya are training and transportation. The need for expanded training of teachers, parent education, and training of local preschool committee members in leadership and management are critical. Training in primary health promotion should also be expanded. The area of transportation is critical for District Education staff, given that their job involves community mobilisation, supervision of teachers, and encouragement of intersectoral collaboration to benefit children and families. It is further recommended that this report be disseminated at a series of community forums, beginning with the districts which participated in the study in order to contribute further to the planning process.

### Mauritius Case Study: Quality Child Care

Mauritius was chosen because it provides an excellent case for reviewing the effects of the burgeoning demand for childcare resulting from an increase in women's participation in the labor force. Mauritius is also piloting a unique financing scheme through a cost-sharing partnership between the Government and the private sector.

The specific objectives of the Mauritius study include:

1. To assess present daycare practices in terms of coverage and quality
2. To propose minimum norms and standards to be included in legislation.
3. To recommend policy and programme interventions to the Government

The study will provide an analysis of daycare centres, with a focus on determining the quality of two basic types of provision. These will include daycare centres that operate in the formal sector, run on a commercial basis, and home daycare that operates in the informal sector, comprising services provided by neighbors, grandparents and/or relatives. The study will include a comparison between the quality and level of care in both models. The qualitative and quantitative data generated will provide information that can serve as the basis for the framing of policies to promote early childhood development.

### South African Case Study: Assessment of Cost-effective Integrated Strategies for 0-4 Year Olds

After years of lobbying by early childhood groups, the South African Government has finally come to view early childhood development as the starting point for a human resource development strategy and plans major initiatives in this area in the future. (See discussion of the process of getting early childhood on the agenda in South Africa in the J. Evans lead article.) However, at the present time these plans will be focussed on the inclusion of 5-year-olds in the compulsory phase of general education. There is now a need to have a more adequate understanding of the services that can be provided to very young children (0-4 years of age).

Previous studies identified the high costs of serving infants and toddlers in formal centre-based programmes, which are clearly beyond South Africa's economic resources. What advocates have proposed is to expand the use of lower-cost home-based programme options, but there has been no study to evaluate the relative benefits and efficiency of such programmes. The present study will focus on these questions as well as address intersectoral linkages in programmes for this age group. The results of the study will be provided within the context of the general situation of families and children, and within the field of early childhood development in South Africa. Specific data will be collected in relation to the identification and description of on-going home-based programmes serving children from birth to 4 years of age. Existing programmes will be described in terms of their origin and who they serve, their objectives, coverage, the services provided, training and support for staff, constraints and lessons learned. Data will also be collected on the costs and financing of the various models.

The methodology of the study includes the following activities:

- Existing documentation will be summarised and updated to include the most recent statistics on women in the labor force, the impact of AIDS and other social variables;
- Case studies will be prepared involving the close examination of 10 programmes, describing in detail their impact in their particular context, the costs associated with the model and its potential for replicability. Programs from different regions will be studied in order to have a representative sample of geographic location, populations targeted by race and social class, the sectors involved in the programme, and alternative financing models;
- Impact indicators will be developed. These will attempt to measure the impact of the programme on the child, the family and the community. In terms of the child, there will be an assessment of the child's health status and an assessment of how children are progressing in terms of their general development. In the absence of time to do longitudinal follow-up or even tracking of children, the study will rely on generally accepted indicators of developmental progress. Attempts will be made to see if there is an impact on the mothers. And effects on the community will be sought in terms of environmental indicators (such as safety, sanitation, etc.) that might be impacted by the programme;
- Data will be gathered through individual and group interviews, questionnaires, observations, financial statements/records, growth monitoring records and other progress reports

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UNICEF/5753/Lauren Goodsmith

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The report on the project will synthesize the case study and provide pointers for consideration in the development of a prototype programme for the 0-4 age group. The Draft White Paper on Welfare and Social Development (currently in preparation) will contain a National Programme of Action for Children which has prioritized services for 0-4 year olds. The report on this study will be linked to the guidelines in the White Paper as well as to the articles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. By creating the links to emerging state policy in concrete ways, this case study can contribute to the development of services for children 0-4 in South Africa.

### USAID

As part of the reorganization of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in 1994, the Bureau for Global Programs, Field Support and Research (Global Bureau) was established. One of the five centers of excellence in the Global Bureau is the Center for Human Capacity Development (G/HCD). (The other centers are: Democracy and Governance, Economic Growth, Environment and Population, Health and Nutrition.)

The Center for Human Capacity Development provides technical leadership, research, evaluation and field support services to achieve USAID strategic goals and help nations improve and expand access to the quality and effectiveness of learning opportunities in formal, nonformal and informal educational settings.

The development of human capacity—the ability of people to discover, learn, improve and maintain, which permits them to participate at all levels of society in matters which affect them—is a lifelong learning process. Beginning at birth in the family circle and extending into the community, marketplace and formal classroom, people gain the knowledge, cultural values, understanding and skills required for survival, individual fulfillment and their participation in and contribution to society.

Increasing human capacity is essential to promoting economic growth, protecting the environment, limiting population growth, improving child and family health, achieving democracy and responding effectively to natural and manmade crises and disasters.

G/HCD is organized to achieve two strategic objectives (SOs) and three related strategic support objectives (SSOs):

- SO 1: Nations improve and expand basic education.  
SSO 1: Improved and expanded basic education, especially for girls and women.
- SO 2: Improved postsecondary and educational training systems, linkages and networks  
SSO 2: Workforce better prepared for sustainable development.  
SSO 3: Agency training policy, procedures and programs improved.

Basic education includes early childhood development, primary and secondary education, teacher training, adult literacy and numeracy and civic education within the context of a national system of education and training. Given limited resources and serious need, priority is placed on the education of girls and women. This is illustrated explicitly by two of the seven activities which are concentrating on improving and expanding basic education and learning systems—namely, *Progeny: Meeting the Developmental Needs of Young Children and Their Families* and *Girls' and Women's Education Projects*.





The Progeny project will provide field support for integrated, comprehensive, continuous and culturally-appropriate approaches to meeting the developmental needs of young children and their families. The Girls' and Women's Education project seeks to build local capacity to identify barriers to girls' education, develop and implement appropriate policies, programs and practices to overcome them and ensure increasing educational opportunities for girls at the primary and secondary levels.

In addition, there are sixteen activities which focus on education and training for sustainable workforce development—that is, investing in people. Six of the projects are concerned with specific aspects of education and training and ten activities provide a range of technical assistance and support services.

G/HCD offers a range of professional and technical resources to serve the human capacity development and related programming needs of field missions, regional and central bureaus and other units in USAID. These resources and their outreach and effectiveness are enhanced and strengthened by collaboration with other donors, private and voluntary and other nongovernmental organizations, U.S. higher education institutions and private firms.

A directory of services, which describes HCD Center programs and resources, is available on request. Write or call: Valerie Price, Office of Policy and Programs, Center for Human Capacity Development, Bureau for Global Programs, Field Support and Research, Room 608, SA-18, 320 21st Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20523-1814. Tel: (703) 875-4134; Fax: (703) 875-4157.

## UNESCO

UNESCO has a series of new publications.

*Training of Trainers in ECCD pack:* We have published, with the Bernard van Leer Foundation, the 5-volume training pack, *Enhancing the Skills of Early Childhood Trainers*.

The training pack may be ordered through: UNESCO Publishing, Promotion and Sale Division, 1 rue Miollis, 70032 Paris Cedex 15, FRANCE.

The unit price is US\$30 or FF 150. There are no shipping charges unless buyers request registered mail or DHL delivery.

The ISBN Number is 92-3-103130-9.

To order by fax, the number is (33-1) 42 73 30 07. Payment may be made through Visa, Eurocard or Mastercard by sending card number and expiration date of card. American Express cards are not accepted.

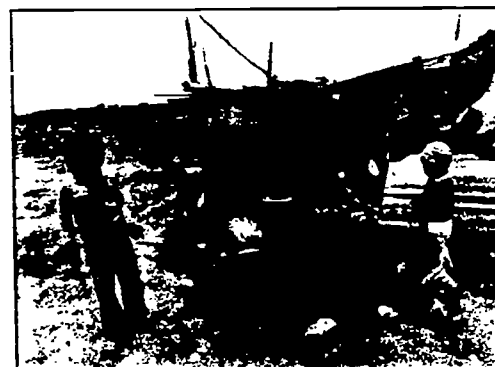
*Data base and Publications Series.* Two more monographs have been published in our Action Research in Family and Early Childhood series:

- *An Evaluation Study of Parent Schools in China,*
- *Nourish and Nurture World Food Programme Assistance for Early Childhood Education in India's Integrated Child Development Services*

Among the publications to be released before the end of the year are the following:

- *Directory of Early Childhood Care and Education Organizations in the Arab States,* with information on 64 organizations in 12 Arab countries;
- *Directory of Early Childhood Care and Education Organisations in Asia and the Pacific,* with information on 360 organisations in 30 countries in Asia-Pacific;
- with Childwatch International, *Children's Rights Directory of European Research and Documentation Institutions,* with information on 182 institutions in 30 European countries;
- a statistical wall chart, *Early Childhood Care and Education Basic Indicators on Young Children,* presenting 11 indicators for some 180 countries: number of children under 5, under 5 mortality rate,

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UNICEF/Graciano

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malnourished children under 5, female and male literacy rates, total fertility rate, GNP per capita, access to healthcare services, access to safe water, age group enrolled in preprimary education, preprimary gross enrollment ratio.

These publications are available through:

John Bennett  
The Young Child and Family Project  
UNESCO  
7, Place Fontenoy  
75700 Paris, FRANCE  
Tel: (33-1) 45 68 08 15; Fax: (33-1) 44 49 99 18

## Christian Children's Fund

### Standardised Indicators of Programme Impact Agency-Wide

**Background.** The Christian Children's Fund (CCF) has 20 field offices in Latin America, Asia and Africa, which, in turn, oversee more than 1,300 community-based programmes. Approximately 500,000 children are enrolled in these programmes and benefit directly from them. Our goal is to develop cost-effective and innovative programmes that impact positively on the health and education of the children and families with whom we work.

To measure our effectiveness in promoting health and education outcomes, CCF has spent the past year developing a standardised instrument and methodology that can be used at the community level by the families themselves. This system is to highlight programme strengths and weaknesses by *red flagging* key results. In drawing our attention to flagged data, follow-up investigation will determine why these results (both the good and the bad) were obtained. This information must be easily understandable and accessible to both parents and staff. In this process, we will be able to prioritize our actions and resources so that we can continually improve upon the effectiveness of our interventions over time.

Since CCF is a highly decentralised organisation, and the content of our programmes is determined by the families who benefit from them, it is a challenge to standardise any part of our work. Historically, there have been a number of attempts to standardise programme evaluation. In retrospect, it seems that these were too comprehensive and the effort required to gather the data was a fatal flaw. In addition, issues of technology and computerisation were part and parcel of the initial design despite the fact that the organisation as a whole was at its infancy in terms of integrating this type of technology into our programming environments. Learning from this institutional experience, it was decided that the newly designed system would be very simple and basic, and would require only a piece of paper and pencil to operate. Information gathered at the community level would be aggregated at higher levels of the organisation but no new information would be added as data moved upward through the organisation. Within these broad design parameters, the content of the system was very much open.

**Programme Impact Measurement System Design.** Our strategy for developing standardised indicators of measurement was to bring together some of our best field staff from both the programme and administrative areas of our operation. We contracted a consultant with expertise in developing programme evaluation systems that operate under remote field conditions with human resources who have minimum literacy skills. This group designed and field tested the system over the course of a year at which time a manual was developed and introduced to the field. This system will be phased in over the next four years so that all 1,300 projects will be using it by 1999.

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In retrospect, a number of key design decisions were made early in the project that have helped to focus the initiative. These are:

- To focus measurement indicators on programme impact, not programme activities;
- To focus programme impact on children, not adults. The exception is when there is a proven association between caretaker knowledge or behaviours and child outcomes;
- Programme impact must be measured in terms of health and education outcomes, both broadly defined;
- To measure only what we are prepared and able to act upon.

A series of *sieves* were used to sort through dozens of potential indicators to arrive at the final core group. These were:

- Does the indicator measure what we want to measure?
- Is there a proven association between the indicator and what is being measured?
- Does the indicator yield data that it is absolutely necessary to know, rather than just nice to know?
- Does the indicator yield data that is useful for programme planning and management?
- Is the object of measurement possible to measure, both technically, financially and managerially?
- Is using the indicator worth the time and effort to measure?
- Does the indicator measure process or impact?

**Indicators.** The net result of the sifting process was to identify 10 indicators that form the core of the standardised programme impact measurement system. These are:

1. Infant and under-five mortality;
2. Nutritional status;
3. Immunization coverage;
4. Diarrhoea management;
5. Acute respiratory illness management;
6. Safe water access;
7. Sanitary disposal of human excreta;
8. Literacy of over-fifteen year olds, disaggregated by gender;
9. Early childhood development programme enrollment;
10. Formal and nonformal education enrollment.

Over the course of this year, 12 of our field offices will implement this system in approximately 145 of our community-based projects (about 11% of all projects). This will cover approximately 63,000 families of enrolled children (about 12%). The remaining eight offices will conduct a survey of a sample of children in a sample of community-based projects, using 5 of the 10 standardised indicators.

**Data Analysis Tools or 'Red Flags'.** Since our effort is to link the programme impact data results with programme planning, resource allocation, and management decisions, it is imperative that our analyses provide us with usable information. We have identified four types of analysis, any one of which can yield a *red flag*. These are:

- Statistical tests of significance.
- One or more positive or negative standard deviations from the mean.
- Comparison of CCF findings to data reported by others (e.g. UNICEF, UNDP, WHO, etc.)
- Comparison of CCF findings to international standards or goals (UNICEF, WHO, etc.)

Of course the key analysis is to track trends within the same programmes over time. However, in using these analytic tools this past

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year we were able to discover that while we have many programming areas we will want to strengthen, our programmes report many strengths as well.

**Results to date.** While we designed the long-term system for measuring programme impact over the past year, we also undertook a parallel initiative. From June to December of 1994, all 20 of our field offices conducted a baseline survey on a sample of children in a sample of projects using five standardised health, nutrition and education indicators. The sample covered approximately 12,500 enrolled children in about 550 projects. While a report is being prepared, we present here a brief summary of the major findings:

- Approximately eight out of ten enrolled primary school-aged children were promoted to the next grade last year. UNICEF's goal is to enable eight out of ten children to complete primary school by the year 2000.
- 78% of under five-year-old children were found to have complete immunizations. Our goal is to attain 90% coverage for under-one-year-old children.
- 65% of the enrolled children were reported to have received oral rehydration therapy to treat a case of diarrhoea. While our goal is 100% usage according to a WHO survey covering most of the countries in which we work, they report 35% usage rates.
- As would be expected, malaria was found to be most prevalent in Africa, compared to Latin America and Asia.

We found collecting data on the nutritional status of children to be challenging. Obtaining accurate weight and height measurements of children was difficult, and determining their nutritional status using standardised WHO tables was problematical. We found that only a small percentage of the reported data was reliable, and this is why we are not reporting it. We hope to improve upon this effort during the second year of the initiative.

**Conclusion.** Implementing the standardised measurement system is our critical goal for next year. However, we are looking ahead to develop the next generation of measurement indicators. We want to move beyond basic health and education, to identify indicators that can measure the more developmental impact of programmes on children. In addition, based on the sample survey results, specific health and education programmes report findings that have been *red flagged*, using the analytical tools mentioned above. We will follow up and look more closely at these to determine what programming lessons they hold for our organisation. For more information about the project, contact:

Mr. Iason Schwartzman  
Christian Children's Fund  
2821 Emerywood Parkway  
Richmond VA 23294-3725  
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## Childwatch International

**Indicators for Children's Rights: a project to identify and develop indicators for use in monitoring the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).**

To ensure effective implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, so that children really benefit from the protection it gives, practical indicators based on reliable statistical or other data-gathering methods are required. These must be easy to collect, interpret and use, not only by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, but also by UNICEF and specialised agencies of the United Nations as well as national governments and the NGO community.

The Committee on the Rights of the Child has called for indicators related to the various articles of the Convention, that could meet some basic requirement such as validity, objectivity, sensitivity, comparability, accuracy and disaggregation, and has appealed to the UN system, NGOs and the research community for assistance. In response, Childwatch International, in collaboration with others, has designed a project to meet the needs expressed by the Committee. The project involves the development of indicators to monitor the implementation of the CRC. Through a series of country case studies, the project is developing a strategy for identification and development of appropriate indicators. The project began in August 1994 and is expected to be finalised by the end of 1996.

The results of the project will be presented in Country Case Reports, as well as in a Summary Report that combines the results and experiences of the entire study as a whole, with recommendations for future action and activities. The project will also produce manuals and other appropriate training materials on the process of developing and using indicators based on easily available quantitative and qualitative data.

**Country Case Studies.** A crucial feature of the project is the sequential implementation of a series of country case studies. Within each country suitable indicators will be sought that can be reported on to the Committee on the Rights of the Child. The process of conducting case studies sequentially will allow for the testing of methods developed and provide the experience from which conclusions can be drawn and recommendations formulated for future studies. Through the involvement of national research teams in the case studies, the project will contribute to capacity building within child research and child welfare organisations in the participating countries.

In order to identify countries that could provide relevant experience for the project and serve as a testing ground for various approaches, the following four criteria are being applied:

1. Countries should have experience with the process of reporting to the Committee on the Rights of the Child on their implementation of the Convention and/or have prepared a comprehensive National Programme of Action for Children. This is to ensure that the countries are either motivated to address the issue of identifying indicators for children's rights, or have relevant experience with seeking such indicators.
2. Countries should be in a situation that is comparable to and representative of other countries in their region, and have socio-economic and geographical characteristics of sufficient complexity to produce a variety of living conditions for children.
3. Countries should have research communities with the capacity to undertake the case studies, an open and easily accessible government administration and be easy to operate in.
4. Countries should have the presence of international development assistance organisations (UNICEF, Save the Child, Plan International, YMCA) and local NGOs, who have the potential to be brought into the project as cooperating partners and supporters of the case study.

A pilot study in Senegal, concentrating on two articles of the Convention, was completed in November 1994. The report of this study was the subject of an expert consultation process parallel to the European Conference on Monitoring Children's Rights at the University of Gent, December 13-14, 1994. The full case study took place between January and April 1995. Depending on a number of factors, including securing adequate funding, case studies of Vietnam, Thailand, the Philippines, Zimbabwe and Nicaragua are likely to be carried out. Future plans include possible studies in Armenia, Belgium and Chile.

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**Preliminary Conclusions from the Pilot Study.** The experience of the case study in Senegal has led to the following conclusions:

1. It is not desirable to seek a single universal set of indicators, but rather a core of universal indicators that are appropriate to identifiable bio-physiological aspects of child development, together with a process and a framework that can be used to develop indicators for children's rights that are culturally and nationally appropriate.

2. It is important to work internationally towards the establishment of data collection methods that are child-centred. Current data sets depend more on the needs of agencies than the needs of children. Nevertheless the regular data collecting methods of both governments and non-governmental organisations often provide raw data that can be recalculated to produce child-centred information. Moreover, there is potential for regular data collection systems to be modified in the future, at little cost, to improve information on the progressive achievement of children's rights.

3. Children's rights indicators require not only child-centred data but also high degrees of disaggregation for both baseline and monitoring indicators. This could be achieved through recalculation of existing data.

4. An enormous amount of information about children, both qualitative and quantitative already exists. Much of this is good quality but varies with respect to accessibility, analysis and sheer physical condition. One aim of the country studies will be to establish modelling procedures by which existing data sets can be reconciled in order to provide meaningful information.

5. Country case studies can act as catalysts for stimulating new levels of debate, cooperation and capacity-building.

6. Fruitful lines for future development of monitoring indicators are evident. Among these are the use of existing data collection points (schools, clinics, NGO community projects, etc.) on a regular basis.

As the country case studies take place, meetings between country research teams are planned, to achieve a standardisation of process and a framework for the methodologies and methods developed for this project. These gatherings will serve as a contribution to national, regional, and international capacity-building in child research and social indicators, as the participants will be in contact with state-of-the-art methodology and have an opportunity to apply their experiences in an international comparative study.

In this project there is close collaboration between Childwatch and other agencies and organisations, international and national. These include UNICEF, Save The Children, Plan International, the Children's Rights Centre at the University of Gent, the Conseil pour le Developement de la Recherche Economique et Social en Afrique (CODESRIA), and Defense for Children International.

The primary target for the results of the study will be the Committee on the Rights of the Child, which is seeking tools to assess the implementation of children's rights in countries that have ratified the Convention. The information will also be of value to inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations involved in facilitating implementation of the CRC. Last, but not least, the data will be made accessible to the general public through such media efforts as the Childwatch TV Project which annually will provide an update on the status of the world's children.

For more information on the project contact:

Trond Waage

Childwatch International

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## Meetings in 1995

### Participatory Development Communication and Basic Education

February 10-11, 1995.

*Needs and Perspectives within the Context of West and Central Africa. A Consultative Meeting on IDRC's Programme in Development Communication.\**

The International Development Research Centre (IDRC) supports research projects for sustainable and equitable development in the world. The IDRC defines development communication as a process that brings together groups and communities to identify problems, seek solutions and put them into action. Real and lasting improvement can only be achieved when people take responsibility for the process: participatory communications ultimate goal is to involve people in the development process.

Research in Development Communication is a project, developed by IDRC, which focuses on Sub-Saharan Africa. Nine countries were selected as representing regional diversity: Mali, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Ivory Coast, Benin, Guinea, Nigeria, Ghana and Cameroon. The project will use participatory methodology and include representatives from NGOs and community movements in the areas of health, education, literacy, rural development and integration of women. Participatory consultation conducted in the region at a meeting in Ougadougou, Burkina Faso, in November 1994, identified Participatory Communication for Basic Education as a priority theme. *The participants decided that the target group for the project should be women and young girls*

The meeting on February 10-11, 1995 brought together 60 participants from Africa, Malaysia, USA and Canada to debate the best ways to develop, orient and structure the programme. Discussion groups focused on the role of participatory development communication as a tool for non-formal basic education; the potential of women and young girls as communicators (roles and cultural barriers) and their specific needs in relation to nonformal basic education, training needs in participatory development communication and related research activities, and implementation of a regional Secretariat for the Research

Program in Development Communication.

In discussions on basic education, the group debated definitions of basic education and participatory communication and examined the potential contribution of participatory development communication. The discussion on women and young girls focused on the obstacles and barriers facing women in the process as well as their role and potential. Another group attempted to define the training needed, its target participants, objectives and content, while a fourth group came up with a concrete plan to establish a regional secretariat for the project.

For further information on the IDRC Project contact:

Guy Bessette  
Senior Programme Officer  
IDRC CRDI, 250 Albert St.  
Ottawa, Ontario K1G 3H9, CANADA

or

Alioune Camara,  
Senior Programme Officer  
Regional Office for West and Central Africa  
IDRC, B.P. 11007, CD Annex  
Dakar, Senegal

### Children's Television Charter, presented at the World Summit on Television and Children

Melbourne Australia, March 1995.

*Report submitted by Feny de los Angeles Bautista, Field Representative, Consultative Group on ECCD*  
A Children's Television Charter was developed and presented at the World Summit on Television and Children, held in Australia in March, 1995. At the Summit the Charter was discussed in depth by delegates from over 70 countries. It was then revised by a representative group of Summit delegates.

The Charter is conceived as a worldwide television industry commitment to principles embodied in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child which has been ratified by over 90% of the world's governments.

The Charter will be circulated for endorsement to children's television industry leaders worldwide, including all 637 Summit delegates. The Charter will be made public to ensure that viewers have a standard against which to judge provision for their children. Telecasters and producers

\* This report was written by Eva Kupidura and included in the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) News No. 1-2 1995 pg 5

will be urged to heed its seven points when making decisions concerning programme production, acquisition and distribution. Advocacy groups, researchers and festivals will be encouraged to adopt the Charter as the standard for evaluating service to young people.

Governments, advertisers and funding organizations are called on to recognize the need for stable, adequate support for domes-

tic children's television. Those companies that endorse the Charter will be asked to report annually on their own performance vis-a-vis the Charter's standards. "This report will be a valuable strategic tool for those companies that take it seriously," said Anna Home, President of the European Broadcasting Union Working Group on Children's and Youth Programming, and the author of the first draft of the Charter.



UNICEF/92-0353/Roger Lemoine

### The Children's Television Charter

As stated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which has been ratified by more than 170 countries, broadcasters should recognize children's rights in the production of children's television programmes. As those responsible for the world's most powerful and widespread medium, and its services to children, we accept our obligation to entertain, inform, engage and enlighten young people in accord with these principles. Specifically:

1. Children should have programmes of high quality which are made specifically for them, and which do not exploit them. These programmes, in addition to entertaining, should allow children to develop physically, mentally and socially to their fullest potential.

2. Children should hear, see and express themselves, their culture, their languages and their life experiences through television programmes which affirm their sense of self, community and place.

3. Children's programmes should promote an awareness and appreciation of other cultures in parallel with the child's own cultural background.

4. Children's programmes should be wide-ranging in genre and content, but should not include gratuitous scenes of violence and sex.

5. Children's programmes should be aired in regular slots at times when children are

available to view, and/or distributed via other widely accessible media or technologies.

6. Sufficient funds must be made available to make these programmes to the highest possible standards.

7. Governments and production, distribution and funding organisations should recognize both the importance and vulnerability of indigenous children's television and take steps to support and protect it.

May 29, 1995

For further information about the Children's Television Charter contact:

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Philippine Children's  
Television Foundation  
12 Saint John Street  
Cubao, Quezon City, Philippines  
Tel. (632) 798480, 702824  
Fax (632) 785358, 798480



Indu Balagopal

### Dialogue 95, First Annual Consultative Days

Cyprus 10-15 July, 1995.

*Report submitted by Indu Balagopal, Field Representative, Consultative Group on ECCD.*

The Arab Resource Collective is promoting the idea of Early Childhood Care and Development in Arab societies by bringing together the Regional Consultative Resource Group (RCRG) and other people working with children. The conceptual framework was first developed in a workshop in May 1992, where workers in ECCD identified the challenges and needs they face in their daily efforts. Working with parents and communities was adopted as the priority challenge, and a series of local and regional activities were organized to develop human and material resources responding to this challenge.

In December 1994, the regional workshop on Partnership for a Better Childhood updated the challenges, while including more countries from the Arab region. The various discussions held in December 1994 demonstrated that a serious effort in systematizing and expanding the regional ECCD network was needed to consolidate, enrich, evaluate and expand existing initiatives in the region. One of the ARC's objectives at this stage of ECCD programmes in the Arab world is to facilitate a collective ownership of such programmes, and to discuss the strategy for a work plan to make them sustainable.

In July 1995 the ARC convened the *First Annual Consultative Days Dialogue 95*, to bring together the RCRG and a group of partners to develop collectively a five-year work plan for the region. There were practitioners, academics and other consultants who tried to find a balance between ECCD principles and practices without compromising the regional culture and traditions.

**Rationale.** During the last decade there has been an emergence of interest, dialogue

and action to raise awareness in the Arab society of the importance of the early childhood period. This has resulted in institutions, NGOs, individuals and occasionally government organizations, moving from a health-dominated focus towards a holistic, more child-centred approach. This includes health, education and the welfare of the child and involves partnerships at every level. There is now a global understanding of education which fosters a more active, interactive, independent style of learning, as opposed to acquisition of facts and knowledge through formal methods of teaching. This has a bearing on the attitudes, perception and priorities of adults living and working with young children. This change presents a challenge requiring coordinated effort to facilitate the transition to ECCD.

The Strategy to be undertaken includes the following:

- To facilitate the collective formulation of a philosophical framework for ECCD relevant to the Arab world.
- To strengthen the interdisciplinary communications and partnerships for ECCD within the region.
- To provide an opportunity for exchange of information on new initiatives in ECCD which offer complementary and sustainable programmes, in order to reach an increasing number of children, families and their communities.
- To further the development of a common professional language to facilitate the understanding of concepts and to enable the practitioner to communicate, exchange and develop skills, knowledge, values and attitudes within the ECCD community.
- To identify, evaluate and encourage the development of relevant ECCD resources in Arabic and to facilitate their access, exchange and use by all the partners in ECCD.

Toward achieving this, the objectives of the workshop were:

- To develop a conceptual framework, based on the values and culture of the family and local community in Arab societies, integrating the principles of ECCD and the provisions of the Rights of the Child.
- To agree on the priority challenges and themes to be the focus of ARC's ECCD regional and local activities for the next three years
- To recommend methods of networking among workers, plan the production of country profiles, and develop a regional status report on ECCD.

- To establish the concept of a newsletter, to become one of the instruments of communication and networking.
- To contribute to the process of compilation and assessment of existing Arabic resources in ECCD

**Outcome.** An overall framework based on the integrated approach to ECCD relevant to the Arab world was taken as the reference for planning, data-gathering and establishing local and regional networks to improve communication and facilitate access to available human and material resources. The framework combined Early Childhood principles with the Convention on the Rights of the Child to provide the basis for ECCD programmes as well as for the criteria to evaluate such programmes.

As the first step, the principles of ECCD as applicable to the Arab culture and practices were analyzed and reworded to make them more explicit and acceptable. After extensive and intensive discussions, the principles were agreed upon. Every word and expression had to be carefully chosen in the translation into Arabic, as it had to convey the exact meaning and one that could be understood in all the Arab speaking countries.

One of the major concerns was the erosion of culture in the Arab world, with the influence of outside cultures replacing existing beliefs, attitudes and practices with modern ideas, thus disorienting the community. This, combined with the everchanging milieu of political unrest and displacements in crisis and chaos, contributes to the loss of identity of the child and family, leading to confused communities. It was established that the tension between tradition which is stable, and culture which is dynamic, was inevitable, and that it was important to value culture and respect tradition. The challenge was to move from a purely traditional society to one which is open, without undermining its integrity.

It was pointed out that ECCD should not dismiss the heritage accumulated by society

throughout its history, but reexamine this heritage in view of new knowledge about child development. These discussions were particularly relevant for the Palestinians. In the principles of ECCD a new dimension was added in reference to the child's cultural identity and values, and mother tongue, as being central to the child's healthy and integrated development.

Another important point was that of valuing the role of parents, extended family and community, as is mandated by local tradition, in the education and development of the child.

Finally, it was agreed that every child had a right to happiness, and that adults in the child's environment could not deny the child this right.

During the discussions it became clear that a common glossary of ECCD terms needed to be developed in order to convey the field to practitioners. The conceptual diversity found in ECCD programmes could be used to enrich the experiences. ARC is in a position to encourage the development of a common language by facilitating a regional orientation to ECCD through networking, initiating regional workshops and conferences, establishing a newsletter, enhancing ECCD resource materials, etc.

The proposed plan includes expanding the regional network and starting a regional newsletter to share knowledge and experiences. To achieve this, local workshops will be organized, a regional data base will be established, and resource materials will be reviewed and evaluated. As an outcome of this plan there will be an ECCD status report developed from ECCD country profiles. Through this process human and material resources for ECCD will be developed in the region.

It is now planned to have a "Dialogue" every year to review progress and update challenges.

## Meetings in 1996

### Mid-Decade Review of Progress Toward Education for All, June 1996

**Background.** The *Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs*, adopted by the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien, Thailand, March 1990), foresees a

mid-decade review of progress as an opportunity for governments and organisations to undertake a mid-term evaluation of the implementation of their respective plans and adjust them as needed, and to undertake comprehensive policy reviews at regional and global levels.

The International Consultative Forum on Education for All, the global-level inter-agency mechanism for following up the Jomtien Conference, is the designated focal



point for the mid-decade review (MDR) process designed by its Steering Committee and Secretariat. The Forum Secretariat, based at UNESCO, will cooperate closely with all the Jomtien partners in this regard.

**Purpose.** The global MDR process is intended to serve several purposes:

(i) to take stock of progress toward Education for All (EFA) since the 1990 Jomtien Conference in respect both to the original goals and to the current context; (ii) to identify priorities and promising strategies for overcoming obstacles, accelerating progress, and making cooperation in EFA more effective; (iii) to build and strengthen partnerships among the several actors within and outside the public sector concerned with the provision of basic education; and (iv) to promote renewed commitment to the goals of achieving Education for All within a defined timeframe.

The MDR process and results will enable policymakers, planners and managers in government and in organisations to adjust strategies and plans to develop and support basic education. Insofar as the main EFA partners participate actively in the MDR process, it will promote dialogue and cooperation in implementing national EFA strategies and plans. The global MDR results will be used by several EFA constituencies (Government, UN agencies, donors, NGOs) to determine collective policy and necessary cooperative action.

**Scope.** The MDR is forward-looking, but grounded in an analysis of past experiences in promoting EFA, particularly since 1990. Basic education is understood in the sense of the expanded vision proclaimed in the *World Declaration on Education for All*. The global-level MDR will seek answers to five questions:

- What actions have countries and organisations taken in line with the Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs?
- What progress has been made globally in respect to each of the six 'target dimensions' proposed in paragraph 8 of the Framework, and in respect to the EFA goals that countries set for themselves?
- What new factors may affect the validity of the targets and goals and the prospects for further progress toward EFA?
- What changes in the pattern of investment in basic education seem to be obtaining effective results?
- What problems require increased attention by governments and the world community during the remainder of the decade?

The MDR will also take into account the relevant objectives and commitments adopted

by the world community since 1990 at certain major conferences dealing with development, notably the 1992 Rio Conference on the Environment, the 1994 Cairo Populations Conference, the 1995 Copenhagen Social Development Conference, and the 1995 Beijing Women's Conference.

While all countries are invited to participate in the MDR, the focus will be on the progress achieved in the developing countries which face the most challenges in providing EFA. The Forum's own limited funding will be used to support the MDR process in the developing countries and regions.

**Process.** The Forum will invite national governments, major intergovernment and bilateral organisations and key groups of NGOs concerned with basic education to review their respective EFA actions and plans. The Forum will propose general guidelines for conducting and reporting on these micro-level reviews. These will be important in themselves as well as constitute the main inputs to regional and global MDR activities.

The principal focal point for the country-level MDRs will be the Ministry of Education or another designated EFA mechanism (commission, task force, interministerial committee). The national focal point is expected to work with representatives of other concerned government departments (including Planning and Finance), the teaching profession, NGOs active in EFA, the business community, the media and other international and external partners. Each country will work out its own MDR process, which should be open, participatory and include at least one national meeting on EFA, as well as public information activities. The MDR process should be useful in itself, as well as producing useful 'products' such as reports, studies and strategy documents. Countries are expected to submit a report on their MDR findings to the Forum as an input for regional and global analyses of progress toward EFA.

In order to ensure obtaining information on key aspects of Education for All a variety of initiatives will be undertaken:

- A number of country case studies will be carried out under contract by competent national institutions and/or researchers. The case studies are expected to generate information that will contribute to or complement the national MDRs in the selected countries.
- Desk studies will be carried out to analyse existing documentation in basic education since 1990 to identify significant achievements, trends and problems for each of the

major regions and significant universal issues that need to be addressed by the international community.

- Regional policy review seminars will be held to examine and validate the analysis of EFA progress for each major region and formulate proposals for consideration by the governments concerned and by their external partners.
- A survey of donors and intergovernmental organisations will focus on the significant changes in their policies and modalities of cooperation since 1990, their experiences in supporting EFA, their perception of EFA progress, and their plans for the immediate future.
- The collective reviews of NGOs actively engaged in basic education will bring another set of perspectives into the global MDR process;

- Media coverage of the MDR will be sought at key moments during the entire MDR process. Various EFA advocacy and information activities will be organised by the competent services of the UN system using specialised and mass media channels;
- The involvement of the international business community will be sought, as it constitutes untapped resources for basic education.

The outcomes of the several MDR activities will be analysed and distilled into a report for examination by the Forum at its third meeting, planned for 1996. The final MDR report, including the Forum's conclusions and proposals will be distributed to all governments and submitted to selected meetings in 1996 and 1997 dealing with education and related policy issues.

## Publications and Videos

### *The Twelve Who Survive: Strengthening Programmes of Early Childhood Development in the Third World.*

(PAPERBACK, SECOND EDITION) BY  
ROBERT C. MYERS.  
HIGH/SCOPE PRESS

This highly acclaimed book is now in paperback, making it possible for this important work to reach a much larger audience. Originally published in 1992, in the reprint of this book Robert Myers has added an afterword which provides reflection of what has been learned and accomplished since the book was first published. The book is available for US \$14.95, plus shipping and handling, from:

High/Scope Press  
600 North River Street  
Ypsilanti, MI 48198  
Tel: (313) 485-2000; Fax: (313) 485-0704  
Bulk orders are also possible.

### *Enhancing the Skills of Early Childhood Trainers*

BY KATE TORKINGTON  
AND CASSIE LANDERS  
PUBLISHED BY UNESCO

This training pack was developed to support the Training of Trainers effort that was begun in Africa in February 1995. The pack consists of five parts, each of which is a separate booklet: 1. Introduction to the training pack; 2. Delivering effective training; 3. Guide to the development of the young child; 4. Rationale for experiential/participatory methods; and 5. Resource list. As noted in the introduction, "This Training Pack is intended to persuade, not to prescribe. We want readers and users to take from the Pack whatever fits comfortably with themselves and their work, to use the suggestions if and when it suits them, and to be creative in adapting the ideas to their own circumstances and inventing new ones. The Pack can be used by individual trainers or by groups of trainers. It will probably be most effective if a group of trainers meet together to discuss issues raised in the Pack and try out the activities. It can also be used by individual

trainers as a self-learning Pack." It is available from UNESCO for 150 French Francs, US \$30. For information write to:  
UNESCO Publishing, Promotion and Sales Division  
1 rue Miollis  
70032 Paris Cedex 15 FRANCE  
Fax: (33-1) 42-73-30-07

Quality has become a priority issue for all concerned with early childhood care and education services. Starting from the premise that quality is a relative and dynamic concept based on values and beliefs, the book examines how the definitions of quality are established and who is involved in their establishment. The editors advocate that the process should involve a range of stakeholder groups, including children, parents, staff, care providers, researchers, employers and community. A key issue that emerges is the need for new and creative approaches to the development of inclusionary processes in the definition and attainment of quality care.

*Valuing Quality* examines how quality is defined and by whom. Contributions from 18 authors in 6 countries bring an international perspective to the book's discussion of quality in early childhood services. The authors suggest many ways in which to develop practice from a values-based concept of quality.

Issues covered include: Involving parents and children in defining quality, research and evaluation, training and curriculum, and working in ethnically diverse societies. The book is designed for parents, practitioners, researchers and policymakers. It is available for US \$19.95 plus shipping and handling from Teachers College Press.

Teachers College Press  
1234 Amsterdam Avenue  
New York, New York 10027

It is expected that by the year 2000 only one out of every twenty children born will fail to survive to age one. Thus it seems urgent for us to begin focusing our attention away from questions of survival. We must now address the quality of life that millions of once imperiled infants will have as children. To achieve this paradigm shift in our agenda will once again require creating a union of policy, technology, investment and consensus about the "post-survival" child's life.

This book examines one critical dimension of that life: the opportunity to acquire—through schooling—skills, knowledge, attitudes, and habits that foster personal, community and national development. Specifically the present study reviews *how health and nutrition factors* may impinge on a child's ability to participate in or take full advantage of schools. This book represents an original and concrete way of dealing with education opportunities and eliminating major learning obstacles. In particular, Dr. Levinger's Active Learning Capacity model represents a new and important conceptual tool for integrating basic education reform with health, nutrition and community-based initiatives. This model can serve as a road map for promoting optimal growth, development and learning for all children.

The UNDP, Division for Global and Interregional Programmes, in association with the Education Development Center and USAID, is presenting this book to stimulate a dialogue among national and international agencies, universities and individuals committed to improving the nutrition, health and school performance of children.

*Valuing Quality in  
Early Childhood Services:  
New Approaches to  
Defining Quality*

EDITED BY PETER MOSS  
AND ALAN PENCE

*Nutrition Health and  
Education for All*

BY BERYL LEVINGER

By addressing such topics as the effects of health and nutrition on a child's school performance, active learning capacity, policy and technical environments, this book intends to facilitate information exchange and the decision-making process leading to the judicious allocation or reallocation of financial and human resources. The people involved in this process—specifically the ministers of education, health and planning and international agency officials—may wish to consider the methodology for addressing the child's needs and aspirations discussed herein.

The book is available free of charge. To order a copy, contact:  
 Frank Hartvelt  
 UNDP, Room FF12-102  
 One UN Plaza  
 New York, New York 10017  
 Tel: (212) 906-5858; Fax: (212) 906-6350

*Towards A Children's  
 Agenda: New Challenges for  
 Social Development*  
 LONDON: SAVE THE CHILDREN  
 MARCH 1995

This incisive and constructive document prepared for the 1995 World Summit on Social Development, argues that the status of children in a country should be used as a thermometer of development. Picking up on current efforts to put people and their needs at the centre of decision-making (rather than economic growth) the report makes a strong case for giving children an equal place with adults as policies and programmes are discussed. The welfare and treatment of children is a key test of a society's commitment to human and social development because: 1) children are the most powerless group in society; 2) childhood is a once-and-for-all window of opportunity for biological and social development; 3) failure to support development in childhood has permanent and irreversible effects for individual children and has a massive impact on society's capacity to develop; 4) children are social actors as much as adults; and 5) children's experience of their treatment by adult society will mould their own approach to social development. Still, children continue to be "invisible" in many social policies, for at least five reasons:

- Their productive contributions to society are not recognized;
  - A 19th Century, Western, vision of childhood dominates the thinking of policymakers;
  - Adults pursue their own interests;
  - Children seldom are allowed to participate in policy discussions;
  - There is a failure to collect child-specific information.
- Suggestions are made in the report to overcome these difficulties. A "Children's Agenda" is set out, providing 10 basic principles to which social policy and practice should adhere. And the report calls for:
- measures that enable adults to combine their childcare and productive roles effectively;
  - using more tax revenue for childcare and child development, including more investment in pre-primary and primary education, primary healthcare and community-based childcare;
  - development of additional resources for female literacy and education;
  - protection of investment in women and children during policy reforms or economic adjustment;
  - monitoring the impact of key policy measures on children;
  - recognition of children's contribution to economic, social and cultural life by including them in data sets and by disaggregating data by age as well as by gender.

- development of mechanisms to include children's views in decisions which affect them and to allow them to participate in public debates;
- reforms of legal frameworks to promote the best interests of children (as outlined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child).

This document can be obtained from:  
Save the Children  
17 Grove Lane, London SE5 8RD, England

Because UNICEF is the main international organisation with a mandate to promote policies and programmes affecting the welfare of young children, it is important to try to keep abreast of UNICEF's approach to early childhood care and development (ECCD) programming. The present ECCD strategy of UNICEF is set within a more general policy within UNICEF directed toward providing basic education for all, as pledged at the World Conference on Education for All held in Jomtien, Thailand in March 1990. Accordingly, we present a brief description and review of the UNICEF pamphlet titled, *UNICEF and Basic Education*, which presents priorities, policies and goals for the year 2000.

The focus of UNICEF policy and of this pamphlet is on achieving universal primary education (UPE), taking the following guidelines for action into account. Programmes should:

- adopt a systemic and holistic approach to basic education and development;
- build a unified but diversified primary education system;
- expand while improving quality;
- focus on female education;
- start early with parents and the family; -
- make adult education an important supportive strategy.

Strategies to be pursued in achieving basic education for all include:

- revitalizing the primary school network;
- targeting the difficult-to-reach through complementary non-formal approaches;
- emphasizing and monitoring learning achievement;
- enhancing national and local capacity;
- establishing local area-based planning, managing and monitoring for UPE;
- strengthening popular participation, social mobilisation and public monitoring;
- determining priorities for complementary elements (e.g. attention to the young child, adult basic literacy);
- identifying and disseminating relevant information on successful experiences;
- focussing on the nine High Population Countries and on EFA in Africa.

Commentary:

1. ECCD appears in the UNICEF programme as a "supporting strategy" for efforts to improve and expand primary education. It is not recognized as good in its own right or as a separate component of basic education, as set out in the Jomtien Declaration in 1990.

2. At the core of the UNICEF approach to ECCD is the education of parents and family

3. The wording of the section of the pamphlet dealing with "start-

# *UNICEF and Basic Education.*

UNICEF.

THE EDUCATION CLUSTER.  
NEW YORK, 1994



ing early with parents and family' suggests a 'compensatory' view of ECCD. The text is as follows: 'Relevant early childhood programmes are necessary to compensate for the deprived family and community environments of many children. This viewpoint contrasts with a more "constructive" one in which ECCD programmes build on the positive elements in a given environment.'

*Start Right. The Importance of Early Learning*

BY CHRISTOPHER BALL, LONDON  
THE ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE  
ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE ARTS,  
MANUFACTURING AND  
COMMERCE (RSA)  
MARCH 1994

The explicit intention of this report is to influence preschool policy and practice in the United Kingdom. The presentation provides an excellent model for those who would translate research and evaluation information into implications for policy and practice, set out in an orderly and clear way. At the outset, the report examines research evidence and experiences from other countries in order to define good practice in preschool education. It concludes that early learning matters, but there are important impediments to progress in this area, that quality counts and that a new solution is needed to provide universal entitlement to early learning. This review is followed by an analysis of the patterns of daycare and preschool provision in the UK, looking (for each type of provision) at the percentage of children covered, approximate costs to parents, hours, ages of children admitted, staffing and training, ratios of staff to children, and administrative responsibilities. The conclusion reached from this analysis is that "The current situation is little short of a national scandal." Then, 'good practice' is defined (see below) and a practical programme is offered to realize the vision of good practice. Seventeen recommendations are presented, addressed to parliament, educators, parents, communities and the Government.

**Good Practice.** A particularly interesting feature of this report is its attempt to define "good practice", a topic that is approached in several ways. At one point, the following key factors to success of an early learning programme were identified: 1) a curriculum which encourages *active learning*, 2) well-trained staff of the highest quality, and 3) the involvement of parents in a *triangle of care*. Adequate resources and political will were also mentioned as keys to success. Subsequently, common features of good practice were set out. These are:

- Clear aims and objectives, integrating education and care, and with targets for growth by specified ages;
- Broad, balanced and developmentally-appropriate curriculum;
- A variety of learning experiences which are active, relevant and enjoyable, encouraging purposeful play;
- Development of warm and positive relationships;
- Well-placed, stimulating, secure and healthy environments;
- Commitment to equal opportunities and social justice.

In addition to these general features, several more specific attributes of good practice were mentioned, including: systematic planning, assessment, and record keeping; satisfactory adult/child ratios; continuity of care; consistent staff development; partnership with parents and families; liaison with the community; and effective procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality of practice.

This report is available from  
Lesley James  
RSA, 8 John Adam Street  
London, WC2N 6EZ

The price of 15 pounds includes postage and packing

This book represents the culmination of 15 years of research by Cigdem Kagitcibasi, a Turkish psychologist who was educated in the West. (see the article describing her research on page 24) The volume examines both the theoretical and practical aspects of crosscultural psychology. It places development within a functional context which links the child, family and society as they are embedded in culture. The author presents a portrait of human development from a refreshingly different view *the view from the other side*, from the perspective of the *majority world*. In a world seemingly dominated by American psychology, Dr. Kagitcibasi proposes a crosscultural orientation as a corrective to the culture-bound perspective of much of Euro-American psychology.

Analysing human development in context, while avoiding the pitfalls of extreme relativism, this work studies development with an inclusive, holistic and ecological perspective, focusing on the development of the self and of competence. In so doing, it also attempts to bring together the cultural context with universal standards and psychological processes. It proposes a theory of family change which challenges some commonly held assumptions about the impact of modernisation, and links theory and application while examining the role of psychology in the social change process.

The book will be available in both cloth and paper in November 1995, from:

Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.  
10 Industrial Avenue  
Mahwah, NJ 07430  
Tel: (201) 236-9500; Fax: (201) 236-0072  
e-mail orders to: orders@leahq.mhs.compuServe.com

*Family and Human  
Development Across Cultures:  
A View from the Other Side.*

BY CIGDEM KAGITCIBASI.  
LAWRENCE ERLBAUM  
ASSOCIATES, 1995

The M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation is publishing the SURAKSHA Series. The SURAKSHA Series documents innovative programmes of Early Childhood Care and Education in India, especially those which address the intersecting needs of women, young children and girls. Carefully researched and written by scholars in the field, each study looks in depth at one programme, highlighting its achievements, philosophy and goals.

The series as a whole represented the rich diversity of experience within the country, with a range in terms of geography, auspices and organizational pattern. Scholars and students of Child Development and child welfare would find the series an invaluable source of information, as would policymakers, voluntary agencies and others concerned with programming for women's and children's development. Partial funding for publication of the series has been received from the Aga Khan Foundation, India. Titles in the series include:

Set I - Volumes 1-4

1. *Home Away from Home: Family Day Care in Bombay.* By: Vrinda Datta
2. *In Sight - On site: Daycare for Construction Workers' Children.* Mobile Creches. New Delhi. By: Margaret Khalakdina
3. *Little School on the Hill: Child Education in Community Development Society for Integrated Development of the Himalayas, Mussoorie.* By: Vasudha Joshi
4. *For the Sake of the Children: NGO-Government Partnership in Child Care.* Urmal Trust, Bajju, Rajasthan. By: Kashyap Mankodi

Set II - Volumes 5-8

5. *Children of the Union: Creches for Women Tobacco Workers' Children.* Self Employed Women's Association, Ahmedabad. By: Harshida Pandit
6. *Moving up to School: Community Preschools for the Rural Poor Palmyrah Workers' Development Society, Martandam, Tamil Nadu.* By: S. J. P. Karikalan

SURAKSHA Series  
M.S. SWAMINATHAN  
RESEARCH FOUNDATION

7. *Another Kind of Child Care: Alternatives for Rural Women*. Mahila Samakhya Gujarat. By: Rajalaskshmi Sriram

8. *Working Hand in Hand: NGO-Government Partnership in Child Care*. Bal Niketan Sangh, Indore. By: Jyoti Sharma

The case studies are available in two sets. Set I (Numbers 1-4) is now available. Set II (Numbers 5-8) are due for release in December 1995. Each set costs US \$5.00. Money orders should be made out to the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation. Materials will only be sent once funds have been received. Orders should be addressed to:

M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation  
3rd Cross Street  
Tyramine Institutional Area  
Madras, 600 113 INDIA

*Early Childhood  
Development: The World  
Bank's Agenda*

This brochure, first published in English in 1994, has been translated into Spanish and French. Copies are available from:

Mary Young  
Human Resource Development  
World Bank  
1818 H St N W  
Washington D C 20433  
Tel: (202) 473-3427; Fax (202) 522-3234  
e-mail: myoung3@worldbank.org

*Population Briefs*

This quarterly newsletter features short reports on recent work of the Population Council's Research and Program Divisions and Center for Biomedical Research. *Population Briefs* provides summaries of the nearly 400 reports produced annually by the Population Council, making the information generated by the Population Council available to a wide audience of individuals interested in population issues.

Most of the work reported in the first issue, *Population Briefs* 1(1) January 1995, was undertaken to elaborate major issues that were discussed at the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo in September, 1994, and remain high on the world's agenda. Titles of articles included: New Strategies for Slowing Population Growth, Redefining Family Planning Programs, Progress in Male Contraceptive Research, Feeding a Growing World, Gender Inequalities and Demographic Behavior, Children in Large Families, and Middle East Research: Family, Gender, Policy and Reproductive Health. For more information about the Newsletter contact:

Judith Anderson Masslo, Editor/Writer  
Population Briefs  
Population Council  
One Dag Hammarskjold Plaza  
New York, New York 10017  
Tel: (212) 339-0500; Fax: (212) 755-6052

# Calendar

## December 11-13, 1995

UNICEF, in Thailand

A workshop to review the new UNICEF policy on ECD and to exchange ECD experiences across Latin America and Asia will be held in Bangkok from December 11-13, 1995. Participants will include UNICEF ECD Project Officers, government and non-government counterparts, and selected resource people from both regions. Presentations will highlight innovative approaches to ECD, lessons learned from their implementation, issues related to costs and financing of the programmes and areas of further research and experimentation. Country participants will be helped to review their ECD programmes and develop plans of action for the next two years, and ways to establish and strengthen regional and subregional ECD networks will be discussed. For further information contact:

Cyril Dalais  
Education Cluster  
UNICEF (DH-40A)  
Three United Nations Plaza  
New York, New York 10017  
Tel: (212) 702-7233 Fax: (212) 702-7149  
or  
Sheldon Shaeffer  
Regional Education Advisor  
East Asia and Pacific Regional Office  
19 Phra Atit Road  
Bangkok, 10200 Thailand  
Tel: (662) 280-5831; Fax: (662) 280-3563

## March 6-10, 1996

Comparative International Education Society:  
*Bridging the Gaps* in Williamsburg, VA

For information contact:

Ken Kadlec  
Conference Manager, IIE  
1400 K. Street, NW  
Washington D.C. 1005-2403  
Tel: (202) 326-7771; Fax: (202) 326-7709  
e-mail: KKadlec@IIE.org

## April 9-12, 1996

The Task Force for Child Survival and Development.  
Children First: A Global Forum, Atlanta, Georgia, USA

This invitational forum will include representatives from the six regions of the world who best exemplify practices and models of excellence that have improved children's physical and mental health, education and social development. The approximately 360 participants will focus their attention on the lives of children around the world with an emphasis on children who are healthy and ready to take part in a global community. The sponsors of the meeting include the Task Force for Child Survival and Development, The Carter Center, UNICEF, CARE, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the State of Georgia, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Whitehead Foundation, the U.S. Committee for UNICEF, Emory University, the Child Welfare Institute, the American Public Welfare Association and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. For further information contact:

Susan Yelton, Project Director  
The Task Force for Child Survival and Development  
The Carter Center  
One Copenhill  
Atlanta, GA 30307  
Tel: (404) 872-4860; Fax: (404) 872-9231

# Calendar

## September 5-8, 1996

Association for Women in Development.  
1996 Forum, Washington D.C. USA

The theme for the Forum will be progress toward implementation of WID policies that have emerged from the platforms for action of five recent world conferences: The Beijing Fourth UN Conference on Women, the Copenhagen World Summit on Social Development, the Cairo Conference on Population, the Vienna Conference on Human Rights, and the Rio Conference on Environment and Development.

The International Programme Committee, chaired by Karen Mulhauser is interested in identifying three or four WID issues on which to focus during the Forum. There will be issues that were addressed in the conferences listed, which would benefit from discussion within the AWID Forum. The Forum will focus on implementation issues. At the Forum participants will have the opportunity to participate in substantive educational and informational exchanges with representatives of multilateral institutions, embassy representatives and others who can influence both national and international policy.

For more information on the 1996 AWID Forum, contact:  
Karen Mulhauser  
International Programme Committee, AWID 1996 Forum  
AWID

1511 K Street NW, Suite 825  
Washington D C 20005  
Tel: (202) 628-0440; Fax: (202) 628-0442  
e-mail awid@igc.apc.org



*The Coordinators' Notebook*, a publication of the Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development, is published twice annually.

Co-directors: Judith L. Evans  
Robert C. Myers

Editor: Ellen M. Einfeld

Design/Production: Maureen Scanlon  
Susan Bergeron-West

Printing: Graphic Printing Company,  
West Springfield, MA

For subscription information,  
please contact Judith L. Evans,  
6 The Lope, Haydenville, MA 01039 USA





THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP ON EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT (CG) is an international, interagency group dedicated to improving the condition of young children at risk. The CG grounds its work in a cross-disciplinary view of child care and development

Launched in 1984, the CG has taken as its main purpose the fostering of communication among international donor agencies and their national counterparts, among decision-makers, funders, researchers, programme providers, parents and communities with the goal of strengthening programmes benefitting young children and their families

The Consultative Group is administered and represented by its Secretariat. The Group includes a broad-based network of participating organisations and individuals who share a commitment to fostering the well-being and healthy development of young children. Administrative backstopping is provided by the High/Scope Foundation.

The *Coordinators' Notebook* is prepared by the Secretariat of the CG with support from the Aga Khan Foundation, the Bernard van Leer Foundation, Save the Children USA, UNICEF, UNESCO, USAID and the World Bank.

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## GOALS

**TO INCREASE THE KNOWLEDGE BASE** The CG gathers, synthesizes and disseminates information on children's development, drawing from field experiences, traditional wisdom and scientific research.

**TO SERVE AS A CATALYST** The CG works to increase awareness of issues affecting children, developing materials and strategies to help move communities, organisations and governments from rhetoric to practice, from policy to programming.

**TO BUILD BRIDGES** The CG fosters networking among those with common concerns and interests, working across sectoral divisions, putting people in touch with the work of others by organising meetings, by disseminating information through publications, and by serving as a communications point.

**TO SERVE AS A SOUNDING BOARD** The CG engages in dialogue with funders and decision-makers about developments in the field, providing the base for policy formulation, planning, programming and implementation.

Members of the Secretariat occasionally provide technical assistance to individual organisations in programme design, implementation and evaluation, and in the writing of technical papers and reports.

The *Coordinators' Notebook* is produced twice annually. It is one of our networking tools. Each issue focusses on a particular issue or topic, as well as offering network news. We try to provide information on the most appropriate research, field experience and practices to benefit individuals working with young children and their families. We encourage you to share this information with the other networks you take part in. Feel free to copy portions of this *Notebook* and disseminate the information to those who could benefit from it. Please let us know about any programmes or efforts benefitting young children and their families in which you may be involved.

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